

Teddy Roosevelt's 4th of July Party at the White House

PART TWO



Written by
Pauline de Saint-Just Gross

**Books in the Adventures of Little David and
the Magic Coin Series**

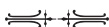
Leonardo da Vinci, Columbus, and Little David

Michelangelo, Columbus, and Little David

Henry VII, Prince Arthur, Columbus and Little David

Anne of Brittany, Arnaud the Page, Columbus and Little David

Isabella of Castille, Boabdil, Columbus and Little David



The America Series

Riding a Buffalo with Theodore Roosevelt and Sitting Bull

A Sourdough Bullet for You, Mr. Roosevelt?

Where in Cuba is Mr. Roosevelt?

Teddy Roosevelt's 4th of July Party at the White House, Part 1

TEDDY ROOSEVELT'S 4TH OF JULY PARTY AT THE WHITE HOUSE

Part 2

The Adventures of Little David and the Magic Coin

Pauline de Saint-Just Gross

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents either are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously.

1. Theodore Roosevelt. 2. White House 3. 4th of July 4. Juvenile Fiction.
5. Scott Joplin

Summary: Quentin Roosevelt takes Michelle and David on a fun adventure reliving past history by exploring rooms of the White House; some secret, some forbidden, but all amazing.

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From an idea by David S. Gross

Contributor: Michelle S. Gross

Edited by Elite Authors

By Invitation Only.

To the curious of all ages who love to learn.

The boy who is going to make a great man must not make up his mind merely to overcome a thousand obstacles, but to win in spite of a thousand repulses and defeats.

Theodore Roosevelt

By Invitation Only

JOIN US FOR A BLAST

Explore the White House, play games and attend a play.

Who: President Roosevelt

Where: White House

When: July 4, 1903

What: Celebrating Independence Day

All you need to bring is a huge appetite to learn
and a willingness to savor the adventures.

Come and join us, David and Michelle

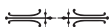
The Adventures of Little David and the Magic Coin

This is how David's adventure started.

On his way to school one day, David finds an old coin. He can't help playing with it while his teacher, Mrs. Savant, talks about Christopher Columbus. He wishes he could travel with him rather than just hear about him.

That's when he discovers the coin's magic.

David will find himself in the company of some of the most amazing people in history.



Teddy Roosevelt's 4th of July Party at the White House, part one.

One day, David invites his best friend, Michelle, to visit the American History Museum in New York. Little does she know, she is in for quite a visit. She doesn't know David has a magic coin and that whatever he wishes comes through. At the entrance of the museum is a statue of a Native American. David finds a feather at the foot of the statue and starts dancing around. Michelle gets embarrassed and tells him she will only dance with real Native Americans.

Wishing on his magic coin, David transport them to a Sioux village in North Dakota where through a chance

encounter they meet a young cowboy named Theodore Roosevelt. Their adventure starts with Theodore Roosevelt who becomes their hero. Fascinated with their meeting with Sitting Bull, they follow Roosevelt to North Dakota where they will meet Nikola Tesla, Edison, and other famous people of the day. When Roosevelt uses Bell's new invention to phone Washington to get the latest news about the situation in Cuba, David and Michelle wish to go there. Unknowing there is a war going on, they befriend Hearst, the famous newspaper publisher, who makes them junior correspondents, and asked them to report everything they see. Searching for Roosevelt, they experience war helping starving children and wounded soldiers. They finally find him at Kettle Hill celebrating the American victory where proud soldiers want him to be President. David and Michelle can't wait to see Theodore Roosevelt as president.

David and Michelle find themselves at the White House on July 4th, 1903 where President Roosevelt is hosting a party celebrating Independence Day. Crashing the party, they become quick friends with Quentin and Archie Roosevelt, the president's children. They meet fascinating people like Kipling, Houdini, Robert Frost, Jack London, and party crashers like Baron Spreckle, Jonathan, and Emily Spinach. A party they will never forget where their hero is now President Theodore Roosevelt.

“Each generation so far has been blessed... It’s a good thing, on the Fourth of July and all other occasions of national thanksgiving, for us to come together, and we have the right to express our pride in what our forefathers did, and our joy in the abundant greatness of this people.

We have the right to express those feelings, but we must not treat greatness achieved in the past as an excuse for our failing to do recent work in the present, instead of a spur to make us strive in our turn to do the work that lies right at hand. If we so treat it, we show ourselves unworthy to come here and celebrate the historic past of the nation...So we come here today on the Fourth of July to see what a great people we are...

We can pay to the great men of the past the only homage worth paying if we show by our deeds that their spirit still live in our souls. Only by so doing can we show that we have a right to celebrate this day that marks the birth of a nation.”

Theodore Roosevelt. July 4th, 1903

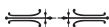
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ENJOY THE ADVENTURE

CHAPTER 1



WHO IS SCREAMING?

“Hurry up, hurry up,” a piercing voice shrieked at the top of the stairs leading to the attic. “What are you waiting for? What are you waiting for?”

Quentin laughed, responding, “Be patient. Loretta is on her way, and so are we. We will be there in a jiffy. Come, everybody, follow me to the magic kingdom that is our attic.”

Houdini, Edith Wharton, Henry James, Robert Frost, Jack London, Churchill, and Paderewski all followed Quentin, President Theodore Roosevelt, and the rest of the gang to the stairwell.

Bitzer, the famous cameraman, said, “I’ll be invisible, and with your permission, Mr. President, I’ll capture all the action on film.”

“Go for it, Bitzer,” the president told the famous cameraman.

“Wait. Someone is screaming,” Edith Wharton said, stopping cold. “Who is it?”

Bitzer was quick to capture Edith Wharton's reaction.

Then, looking at Quentin, she added gently, "Quentin, is that another one of your antics?"

Quentin laughed. "Of course not."

"What's all this uproar?" Robert Frost asked.

"Ask Quentin," Edith Wharton said, laughing. "I'm sure he knows."

As the voice kept on shrieking, everyone else stopped their climb up.

Then Loretta got into the game and started squawking as loudly.

"They are talking to each other," Edith Wharton said.

"Sorry about this little interlude," the president said, laughing. "We will get to the bottom of it and resolve the issue as soon as now."

"Look up. There is the culprit," Kipling said, laughing, pointing at the screaming blue feather offender.

"It sure is. That's Eli Yale, our macaw," Quentin said nonchalantly.

"The most gorgeous macaw there is," President Roosevelt said.

"He certainly is," Henry James agreed.

"My audience would love to see such a beauty come out of my hat," Houdini said.

"I'm not sure a macaw would like that," the president, a bird lover, replied.

"My, Eli doesn't sound happy," London said laughing.

"*O sole mio, che bella cosa...*" Caruso sang jovially.

"Good job, old chap," Churchill told Caruso. "That should cheer him up."

On the contrary, Eli squawked louder with Loretta responding. It was a concert everyone wanted to not hear.

"They both want our attention," the president said.

"We are coming right up," Q said, climbing two steps at a time. "Be patient, Eli."

"Woof, woof," Jack yapped, following Quentin.

"Jack is telling you to be patient too, Eli," Q said.

"What's Eli doing up there?" President Roosevelt asked, frowning.

"I don't know," Quentin replied, shrugging his shoulder, looking guilty.

He passed his father, having no time to explain except to say, "He is telling us we are late for our play in the attic."

"Woof, woof," Jack continued, barking.

Q added, "He loves to keep an eye on us when we play games."

"Woof, woof. Woof."

"What's with Jack?" Edith Wharton asked, then looked at Jack and added, "Come here, my beautiful friend."

But Jack didn't come.

"I expect he wants to snack on Eli," Frost answered.

"Snack on Eli...No...Jack doesn't like the taste of birds," Quentin answered. "He likes to tease Eli and Loretta—that's all."

"Yes, I understand the attic is fun, but nevertheless Eli shouldn't be loose today," the grinning president said, continuing his walk up the stairs. "Archie, can you see to it that he returns to his cage, where he will be safe? Only one bird allowed today."

"Yes, Father," Archie replied, running after Quentin. "Quentin, stop. Father asked *me* to get Eli."

"Oh, all right," Quentin said reluctantly, giving up on getting Eli. "But you know he always comes with us to the attic."

"I know," Archie said. "But today is different."

"Can we help?" Michelle asked, running after Archie.

"No, not now," Archie responded.

"Look at Jack go," David told Michelle.

"Where are you going, Jack?" Quentin yelled all of a sudden. "You are going the wrong way. Wait for me."

He took off like a rocket, running after Jack, who had disappeared around the corner.

"Let's go with Quentin and see what Jack is up to," David told Michelle. "You know it is going to be fun."

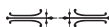
"Are you sure we should follow Quentin?" Michelle replied, uncertain. "Quentin could mean trouble."

"Yes, I am sure. What's the harm in following him? We will meet up in the attic with everyone in a few minutes."

"Do you even know where the attic is?"

"It looks like it's straight up. Quentin will take us."

"OK, then."



Archie quickly walked up the flight of stairs on his way to capture Eli, the wild beast.

Michelle and David left the group without anyone noticing. No one asked where they were going. Like Quentin, they stopped at the second landing, looked around, and listened.

"I don't see them," Michelle said. "I don't hear anything either. Do you?"

"Pretty quiet. Jack stopped barking," David said.

"Where did Quentin go?" Michelle asked looking around.

"Sh, listen—now I hear something," David said, paying close attention. "Can't you hear a voice?"

"Barely."

"It's Quentin."

Both walked in the direction of the voice, turning a corner away from the main stairwell.

"Look! He is with Jack," David said, pointing at them by a door next to a much smaller stairwell.

"I see. Why do you think Jack is scratching at the door?" Michelle asked.

"Who knows?"

"Hey, Quentin," David screamed. "What are you doing?"

"Jack, come with me," Q said, ordering the dog to come to him.

Jack refused to go and continued sniffing and scratching the door.

Michelle and David hurried to Jack and Quentin.

"Hi, guys, what are you guys doing here?" Q asked, turning around.

"We were just curious what you were up to."

"Jack, why are you scratching the door? What's behind the door?" Quentin asked, petting Jack.

Jack, wagging its tail, looked back and forth at Quentin and at the door.

"OK, what are you trying to tell me?" Q asked Jack.

Quentin stood silently for a minute, staring at him and at the door, hesitating.

"Now I'm curious. I want to find out what's behind the door."

He knew something behind the door was exciting Jack. Even though there was no sign saying Keep Out, if he opened that particular door, he would be in trouble. The White House had just been renovated, and because there were still areas that were being worked on, those areas were

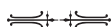
out of reach. The children had been told several times to keep out. Quentin knew the rules, and he knew if he opened the door there would be consequences.

But after all, how bad would the consequences be?

There was too much fun to be had.

He hesitantly put his hand on the door knob. His stomach felt queasy.

CHAPTER 2



QUENTIN BREAKS THE RULE

Michelle saw Quentin was reluctant to open the door. He was always so sure of himself.

“What’s with Quentin?” she thought.

“Quentin, Jack really wants what’s behind the door,” David said impatiently.

“I know but...”

Jack, sniffing, was furiously scratching the door, snarling. Still, Quentin stood there motionless.

“Is there a problem, Quentin?” Michelle asked.

“Not really. It’s just an old elevator,” he said nonchalantly, glaring at the elevator while not revealing the no-trespass rule.

“An old elevator?” David said. “So what? Why are you hesitating?”

“It does look old. How old is it?” Michelle asked.

“I’m not sure,” Q replied. “But I know it was here when we moved in.”

“Does it work?”

“Let’s find out,” Q said, never revealing the keep-out rule. “I really need to check why the door is tormenting Jack.”

Q cautiously opened the door. Jack barked even more excitedly, wagging his tail frantically. There in the back of a glass door was Jonathan, his pet rat.

Jonathan, with its little whiskers moving up and down, stood at attention, staring at Jack with its black eyes. Jack was not intimidated. He was always intrigued by Jonathan and approached the tiny beast swiftly.

“Look at that—Jonathan is not afraid of Jack. He is staying right there, and Jack acts as if Jonathan is his best friend.”

“He is. Why are you here, Jonathan?” Q asked, bending down to pick up the little rat. “Did something scare you that made you run away looking for a safe place to hide? And you lost your way, didn’t you?”

“That’s what the fuss was about,” Michelle said, laughing, petting Jack.

“You were scared, weren’t you?” Q answered. “Jack saved you, Jonathan.”

“Can I hold it?” David asked.

“Sure.”

Quentin handed Jonathan to David. Jack, excited, was jumping all over David, wanting to play with Jonathan. Jonathan would have none of it.

“Jack, calm down,” Q ordered the agitated dog. “Come here, Jack.”

Jack stopped yapping and came to Q with his tail behind his legs, putting his front legs on him.

“What are you going to do with Jonathan?” David asked, petting the rat.

Without hesitation, Quentin said, "We will bring it up to the attic."

"Are animals allowed in the attic?" Michelle asked. "I thought he said no animals but Loretta."

"Yes, animals are allowed," Quentin said, knowing the president would never stop an animal from being part of the playtime activities. "He loves to have Jonathan around. Our animals are a big part of our family."

Michelle looked at David, unsure if Quentin was telling the truth.

Q looked up and down the stairs siding the elevator room, and seeing no one around and nothing out of the ordinary, he opened the see-through elevator door.

"That's an amazing-looking elevator," David said, touching the intricate wrought iron details.

"I have never seen an elevator like this, all open like a cage and fancied up with laced iron," Michelle said.

"It looks like a gargantuan birdcage," David said.

"'Gargantuan.' I like that big word," Quentin said.

"It means huge," David said.

"It does look like a huge birdcage. That's why it is called a birdcage elevator."

"Michelle, did you know there was such a thing as a birdcage elevator?" David asked her.

"No, I have never heard of that, and look at this old box with numbers on the wall," Michelle said, pointing up at it, stepping inside.

"It's a floor indicator," Q said importantly.

"'Floor indicator'—wow, Quentin, that's a big word too."

"I know," Quentin said. "Grown-ups say that all the time."

“Which floor?” Michelle asked, laughing, pretending to move the jutting handle to the right.

“Only two more floors,” Quentin said.

“Do you ride the elevator a lot?”

“Hmm, not lately,” Q answered, avoiding looking at Michelle. “It’s more fun running up and down the stairs.”

“Oh!” Michelle said, looking around pensively.

“I used to,” Quentin said, scratching his head. “Wait...I have an idea. Why not go up my way? The Quentin way!”

Michelle gave David a concerned look.

“What’s that?” David asked, laughing.

“I’ll show you,” Quentin said, grinning.

He stepped on the stairs, grabbed the bars of the elevator, and shook them with all his young might. The elevator didn’t shake, didn’t rattle. It just sat there pompously and proudly.

Quentin, grinning mischievously, said, “It’s safe. I think it’s going to work. Hey, you want to have fun?”

“Yes,” David quickly answered. “Michelle, didn’t I tell you it would be fun to follow Quentin?”

Michelle, frowning, looked at David whispering. “Hmm. Quentin with a fun idea spells trooooooble.”

“Michelle, what makes you say that? Come on, it’s just an elevator going two floors. What can go wrong?” David said, shrugging his shoulders.

“Lots,” Michelle said.

“Quentin, let’s hear your idea,” David said, always up for an adventure.

“Very simple,” Q said. “Let’s go up riding on top of the cage. But...” Looking at Michelle, he added, “Sorry, Michelle, only the two of us can go. We need you to stay here to control the elevator’s panel and take us up.”

Michelle, surprised, looked at the elevator and at David and at Quentin.

"Michelle, are you OK with that?" David asked.

"No."

Michelle raised her eyebrows. "I knew it...but, Quentin, what fun is that for me to be inside the cage?"

"You are in charge of the beast. You will be operating the elevator. Jack will be your helper," Q said convincingly, and then, looking at the dog, he added, "Won't you be, Jack? Plus there is no room on top for all of us."

Pointing to a handle on the elevator's wall, he said, "When I say 'ready,' just move that handle to the right."

"OK, I guess I have to be in the elevator since there is no room for me on top," Michelle said, disappointed about having no choice.

"You will have a turn later on," Q told Michelle.

Turning to Jack, she added, "Come on, Jack. It's just you and I in the beast. You'll help me, won't you?"

Jack wagged his tail and followed Michelle inside the cage.

Q pulled David and said, "Come with me."

They walked to the narrow staircase siding the elevator. Jack, realizing Quentin was leaving him behind, started barking loudly and nonstop. Jack wasn't happy.

"Sh, do be quiet, please," Q told Jack in a very soft voice. "It's only for a minute. If Father hears noise coming from the elevator, he will know we are here, and I will be in trouble."

When Michelle heard the word "trouble," she looked at David.

But David only shrugged his shoulders, unconcerned.

Jack listened to Q and stopped barking.

Michelle started talking to him gently. Jack put both paws on her, pleading for more attention. She petted him gently. Jack was now all eyes for Michelle.

“Good dog,” Michelle said, laughing. “I need you to be heroic. Look, they are going to sit right above us. You can keep an eye on them too.”

They watched David and Quentin dash up the steps and stopped at the top of the cage.

“Can you hop on top of the cage?” Q asked David.

“Of course. It’s going to be so much fun,” David said eagerly.

“And I’m missing all the thrill,” Michelle said, crossing her arms upset.

“Come on Michelle,” Q said. “You will have fun too.”

Standing on the step, Quentin stretched his arms until he reached the bars and, hanging onto the bars of the bird-cage, pulled himself on top. All three watched Quentin clamber cautiously until he laid flat on top of it.

“My turn,” David said, replicating Quentin’s move.

“Be careful,” Michelle said, worried.

“I will. There is nothing to it.”

She added, laughing, “You look like a monkey climbing on the bars of a cage.”

Jack was jumping up and down, just as nervous as Michelle was. “It’s going to be OK,” Michelle said, reassuring Jack.

“By buzzard, we made it,” Q said, comfortably settled on top of the elevator. “Wasn’t that easy?”

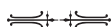
“Yep.”

“Let’s get going. Michelle, ready?” Q asked. “Move the handle to the right,” he added, pointing to the handle affixed to the elevator’s wall.

Michelle looked at the panel on the wall and then up at them, saying, "I am not sure...Can something go wrong?" She examined carefully the arrow on the ancient but very simple metal board on the elevator wall. "This does look simple. But the elevator looks old."

Q pondered a minute and replied, "I'm telling you it's going to be OK. Nothing is going to go wrong. I'm in the elevator all the time. Just move the handle to the right, and the elevator will take us up."

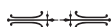
CHAPTER 3



STUCK IN THE ELEVATOR

“OK, there we go,” Michelle said, letting out a loud sigh while moving the handle. A huge cranking noise was heard, so loud she couldn’t make out David and Quentin’s words. All she could hear was their laugh. Even Jack’s bark seemed muffled. The elevator was barely moving up.

Michelle smiled. “It’s not so bad. That was easy to make the beast move.”



All of a sudden, the elevator shook violently, jerked sideways, and stopped.

“Oh, oh, what’s happening?” Michelle yelled, hysterical, wriggling the elevator’s handle nervously. “We are stuck between the floors, and I’m stuck in the cage. What do I do? Help!”

“Sometimes it does that,” Quentin said calmly, looking down at Michelle, who was nervously pacing the elevator.

Jack, sensing a tense situation, started barking furiously one more time, jumping up and down and turning around and around as if chasing a mysterious ghost.

“Sh, Jack,” Quentin told Jack. “You don’t want me in trouble, do you?” Then, looking at Michelle, he said, “Michelle, please try jiggling the handle; it will work.”

“I did,” Michelle answered, frustrated. “It’s just not moving.”

“OK, let me try to reach it.”

Quentin, looking down, tried to put his arms through the bars, but his arms were too short to reach the handle.

“I can’t reach.”

“Oh! Great, you can’t help me,” Michelle said, feverishly moving the handle back and forth. “Why isn’t it moving?”

“I don’t understand—this has never happened,” Quentin said, squirming uncomfortable.

Q didn’t want people asking questions on why Michelle was stuck in the elevator, so he told David, “I have an idea. Why don’t you go get Archie, tell him I need help with Jack, but don’t tell him Michelle is stuck in the elevator? I’ll see what I can do here.”

“OK,” David said, and looking at Michelle, he added, “I’m sure I won’t be long.”

“Hurry up,” Michelle begged.

“Where do I go?” David asked, looking around.

“Take the shortcut to the attic. Very easy. Go up the stairs. At the second landing, turn right and stay straight until you reach the last door on your right. It leads to the attic. Everyone should be there by now.”

“OK, sounds easy.”

In a second, David hopped off the elevator, dashed up the steps, passing the first landing, going up a much narrower staircase and disappearing out of sight at the second landing. Preoccupied about Michelle, David had forgotten all about Jonathan being in his pocket.

As soon as David disappeared, Michelle, determined to get free, continued to jiggle the elevator's knob, which finally unleashed the stubborn mechanism, causing the vibrating elevator to go up to the landing.

"Whew! I'm so happy the elevator finally worked," Michelle said, opening the door of the elevator. "I'm out of here."

"All we needed was a little bit more time for the beast to warm up," Q said, jumping off the elevator onto the stairs. "This old elevator has a mind of its own. That's why my father is upgrading it to an electric one."

"Come, Jack, let's go see Quentin."

But Jack needed no reminder; he was already standing by Quentin.

Michelle, relieved, quickly dashed up the steps of the stairwell to join Quentin at the floor above the top of the elevator.

"Follow me," Quentin told Michelle, running.

"Where are we going?"

"To the attic."

"Of course. Are we taking the same shortcut as David?"

"Yes."

"Do you think David is there yet?"

"I'm sure," Q said, hoping to get to the attic before David.

Around the corner, running to the right to the left to the right again, they ran until they reached a door and stopped.

Q stayed behind the door, listening.

Would he be in trouble?

"We are here," Q said, looking at the scary door.

"I hear people talking," Michelle said, relieved.

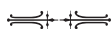
Q just stood there paralyzed.

"Why don't you open the door?" Michelle said, not understanding Q's inaction.

"I am," Quentin said, nervously opening the door very slowly.

"Ha ha," the president laughed. "Churchill, my friend, Ulysses Grant fits you like glove. He, like you, was a military man and a cigar man."

CHAPTER 4



DID HOUDINI PUT A SPELL ON THE ATTIC'S DOOR?

“Hurrah for the president! Hurrah for the president!” Loretta was squawking loudly, perched on a small elephant’s head close to the attic’s entrance. “Who is here? Who is here?”

“Who is here?” Houdini asked the red-and-purple parrot. “I don’t see anyone but us. Are you a magician too?”

Houdini, hoping to see someone appear, looked all around.

“Who is there? Who is there?” Loretta squawked, quivering and clicking her beak.

“No one,” Houdini answered.

“That bird is loud,” Edith Wharton uttered, holding a card. She then covered her ears with her hands.

“Call of the wild,” Jack London said. “Not as loud as President Jackson’s gray parrot. I heard Poll had to be sent

away during his funeral for talking extremely loud. Loretta is just a little loud.”

“Who goes there?” Loretta kept repeating, bobbing her head.

Robert Frost, having some affinity with birds, approached, saying, “I have wished a bird fly away.”

But Loretta stood there fanning her tail in and out, purring.

“Loretta, calm down,” Archie said, petting the red-and-purple feather parrot, “or I’ll have to put you away just like I did with Eli.”

“The bird is not to blame for her key,” Robert Frost said. Edith Wharton and Henry James smiled.

“I wish I was a little bird and enjoy the world from up in the sky,” Jack London said.

“Where is Quentin?” Ethel asked, looking around.

“Here I am,” Quentin answered, opening the door wide open with a twinkle in his eyes. Michelle and Jack were right behind.

However, Michelle was not smiling as she was looking at all the familiar faces around.

“I don’t see David. Where is he?” Michelle whispered to Q, suddenly worried.

“I bet he is inside the attic,” Q answered, happy not to see David. “Don’t worry—he is fine. He is in the White House, after all. What can happen to him?”

“Glad to see you back finally, Quentin. Where on earth were you?” the president asked.

“I went looking for Jack.”

“I see you found him.”

Jack immediately went to the president.

“Good boy,” the president told Jack, and then looking

at Quentin, he said, "Mr. Kipling just picked up a card for the game."

"We are playing a game!" Quentin said, surprised. "I love games—they are always fun. What game?"

"The one we are about to start," Alice said.

"So, you are just in time to pick up a card from Hathi," said the most important man in the country, petting Jack.

"Hathi? Who is Hathi?" Quentin asked confused, looking around at everyone present. "A lot has happened while I was looking for Jack."

"Yes, indeed," the president said.

"But I wasn't gone that long, was I?"

"Hmm," Alice said. "Long enough."

"Hathi is the oldest animal in the jungle," Kipling answered.

"OK," Quentin said, confused. "I have never heard of Hathi. Where is the oldest animal? I don't see him."

"There is Hathi," the president said, pointing at the elephant's head with its trunk up, siding the attic's door.

"That's Hathi?" Quentin said, laughing. "You mean this old knickknack. I'm glad it finally has a name."

"Pick a card, pick a card," Loretta said.

"Is Loretta playing the game too?"

"Hathi is the elephant in *The Jungle Book*, one of my favorite stories," Michelle said.

"Have you ever read that story?" David asked.

"No," Quentin answered. "Is it a good story?"

"Yes, it is about a boy being raised in the jungle by wolves," David replied.

"Then I will read it," Quentin said.

"Do you know what *hāthī* means?" Kipling asked Q.

"No," answered Quentin.

"I do," Michelle answered. "*H th* is the Hindi name for 'elephant.'"

"Hindi?" Q asked.

"The language of India," Michelle said.

"Hathi represents order, dignity, and obedience," said the president. "He is the enforcer of the laws of the land."

"Just like you, Father," Quentin said proudly. "But, Father, why do I need a card?" he added, hopping from one leg to the other, going in a circle.

"Because on this Fourth of July, we are remembering our presidents by playing a game honoring their lives called the president's game."

"Game, game," Loretta screamed.

But by now everyone was ignoring her.

"But I thought we were coming to the attic to look for treasures," Quentin said, disappointed.

"Come, come, you will love this game. By the way, who said you are not going to look for treasures? That's what this game is, a hunt for unique treasures—treasures being objects that belong to past presidents."

Scratching his head while tapping his foot, Q very ceremoniously said, "Oh OK, Father, if you say it's a treasure hunt. Treasure hunts are always fun. Is there a prize for the winner?"

"Yes."

"What do I have to do to win the president's game?"

"To win, you have to be the one that finds the most objects belonging to the president written on the given card."

"Sounds like fun," Quentin said, walking toward the attic's door that his father was guarding. "I love scavenging."

"I know you love treasure hunt," the president said. "And this game will be quick and fun. I will keep track of

everyone's findings. As soon as you hear the bell ring, the game is over, but you need to be present to win."

"What do you win?" Q asked.

"The winner gets to pick the next game," the president said.

"Any games?" Q asked.

"Yes."

"Then it would be baseball," Quentin said.

The president smiled. "Your pick."

"I'm ready—let's go," Quentin said, running to the attic's entrance.

The door was closed. Quentin tried to open the door but couldn't.

"Mr. Houdini, did you put a spell on the door?" Quentin asked, trying unsuccessfully to open the uncooperating door, surprised it wouldn't budge today of all days.

Houdini winked and smiled, keeping Quentin in suspense.

"Quentin, you forgot something?" Archie said, laughing.

"What?"

"Your ticket."

"Ticket, ticket," Loretta repeated.

"A ticket? Since when do I need a ticket to enter 'our' playroom?"

Disregarding Archie's tip, Quentin stubbornly continued fighting with the door, but the door was just as stubborn and refused to obey him.

"Archie is right," the president said. "You need a card to go in. In this case, a card with a president's name on it."

"I don't understand," Quentin said, frustrated. "A card to open a door. That makes no sense. Where is the fun in that?"

Quentin continued battling with the door, mumbling, "What's wrong with this door?"

"What's wrong with this door? What's wrong with this door?" Loretta repeated.

"Mr. Houdini, please."

Houdini smiled.

"Nothing is wrong with the door. You forgot to see Hathi. So please, Quentin, please pick up your ticket. Hathi will give it to you," Ethel said, frustrated. "You are delaying the game."

Quentin ignored Ethel's order and persisted in trying to open the door, but to no avail. "I have come to the attic hundreds of time without ever needing a ticket to enter. What's wrong with the door today?"

The president was listening to Quentin and Ethel while talking to Robert Frost and Jack London.

"Quentin, you do need a ticket to get in today," Ethel reiterated, more patiently this time. "It's all part of the game. Your ticket to enter is the card with the president's name. Do like all of us and go see Hathi."

"Oh OK," Q said, giving up.

He slowly and reluctantly walked toward the elephant but stopped. "I still don't understand why I need a ticket. I don't like this. I always go in without a hitch by just turning the knob on the door," Quentin mumbled.

"Today is different. Why can't you listen and do like the rest of us?" Alice said impatiently. "That's the way this game is played. The game starts before going in."

Quentin looked at Alice and finally relented.

"I'm sorry," Quentin said, resuming his walk to the elephant. "I don't want to cause trouble by being different."

Alice smiled. "Good—then do what everybody did."

"I guess this elephant is not only quiet but useful,"
Quentin said, lifting the trunk up.

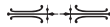
A card slipped out.

"The elephant? Remember the elephant has a name,"
Ethel said. "From now on, he is to be called Hathi."

"Hathi, Hathi," Loretta repeated.

"Oh, right. Hathi," Q said. "Thanks Loretta."

CHAPTER 5



QUENTIN'S TEMPER TANTRUM

Everyone silently watched Quentin pick up the card. Loretta flew to the president's shoulder.

"Time to be quiet, Loretta," the president told her.

Q read it, making a face.

"Oh! Oh!" Edith Wharton said.

"Houdini, to the rescue," Henry James suggested.

"Andrew Johnson, Andrew Johnson," Quentin screamed. "Father, help me. I don't know that president. Who is he? What can I find on him? How can I win?"

"Oh good! You will learn something. Every president has made a contribution. You have to find out what. Just the 'what' will expand your knowledge."

"I never hear you talk about him. Why?"

"Well, Lincoln overshadowed him. It was very hard for him to succeed a great president such as Lincoln," the president said. "Lincoln believed 'public opinion in this country is everything.' Johnson ignored Lincoln's advice and

battled the public will. So even though honest, a president can't be a quarreler, and that's what he was."

"Hmm," Q said. "Can't you see this president is not for me."

"Why?" the president asked.

"I'm not a quarreler."

"True. He had a very interesting hobby, though—right up your alley." The president laughed.

"What hobby?" Q said, pouting, unable to contain his disappointment.

"He kept a pet mouse in his bedroom."

"By golly, but, Father, keeping rats as pets, that's not going to help me win. How can I win with such a president? He couldn't have done much if he kept a mouse as a pet. Why couldn't I have Lincoln, your favorite, or one of my favorite presidents, Jefferson? They were great presidents, and the attic is filled with their things," said Quentin, grimacing.

Quentin made it clear to everyone present he didn't want President Johnson as his president.

"You can't have Lincoln because I got Lincoln," Archie said, approaching Q. "Sorry, little brother."

"I know so much about him, Archie. Can we switch?"

"What do I get in return?"

"Andrew Johnson."

"No, thanks."

"Oh, come on, Archie," Q said. "I'm your little brother—have pity on me." "Sorry, Q, but we can't change the rules of the game," Archie said.

"Who has Jefferson?" Q asked, looking around.

"No one yet," answered the president.

"Father, Father, if no one has Jefferson, why can't I get him?"

"Sorry, son," the president said. "Better to dare things and show that you are equal to do the task at hand. That builds character. You have Andrew Johnson, so it will be a challenge, but I know you can do well."

Quentin listened calmly, but he still wanted another president.

In the meantime, Kipling quickly took a second look at his card and thought maybe he should help somehow.

He stood there looking at Quentin and the rest of the group.

"I got Andrew Jackson," Ethel told Q.

"A leader who liked to order people around just like you," the president said, laughing.

"What do you mean, Father?" Ethel asked.

"You boss your brothers around," the president said. "A great president for you."

Ethel smiled. She knew her father was right, but she nevertheless wanted to help her little brother.

"Quentin, do you want to trade? I'll trade with you. How about Andrew Jackson?" Ethel asked Q.

"No," Q said, firmly crossing his little arms.

"Oh, Quentee! I'm not thrilled about my president either. Look who I got...James Madison," Alice told Q. "I would have liked Monroe because the French called his wife *la Belle Américaine*. And people call me *la Belle* of Washington, but I got Madison, and I'm sticking with him."

"People also call you Princess Alice," the president interrupted.

Alice smiled widely.

"So, Quentin, that's life—you can't always get what you want. Learn to accept and make something with what you have."

Edith Wharton had been listening intently to the drama developing in front of her.

“Oh, Alice! I am so sorry about *la Belle Américaine*,” Edith Wharton said, smirking.

Alice shook her head as if accepting a terrible outcome and looked sad for a moment.

“And, Alice, Dolly Madison established the importance of the White House hostess. She is seen as truly the first First Lady,” the president said. “You are not only seen as *la Belle* of Washington, but you are being treated as the first First Daughter. Madison is perfect for you.”

“You are absolutely right, Father,” Alice said, sighing dramatically.

For once, she was agreeable.

“How about me? I got Glover Cleveland,” Kermit said.

“He loved to play pranks just like you,” the president said, looking at Kermit.

“And, Q, I’ll trade Grover Cleveland for Andrew Johnson,” Kermit told Quentin. He was not really in the mood to play. Kermit wanted to get back downstairs to the East Room as soon as possible for the music and the beautiful girls parading.

“That’s me too—I love to play pranks, but I don’t know much about him either. So no,” Q replied.

“Cheer up. It will be a good learning experience,” the president said. “The important thing is to get into the game and make the most of what you have, just as your big sister said.”

Q looked at his father admiringly and smiled/nodded.

“How about Chester Arthur?” London asked, ignoring the president. “You know he was like me: he moved a lot as kid, and as a teen he used to be rambunctious and fight when he thought something or someone was unfair.”

"I'm not rambunctious," Q said. "But I do speak out if someone is unfair."

"Hmm," Alice said, rolling her eyes, not quite agreeing with Quentin's saying he was not rambunctious.

"As president he was known as the Gentleman Boss. He fought fraud and wanted people to get government jobs based on their merits."

"Like you, Father: you fought fraud when you were a public commissioner," Kermit said.

Quentin, frustrated, was paying close attention but didn't comment.

"Q, cheer up. I'll trade you Buchanan," Caruso said.

"Ten-Cent Jimmy," the president said.

"Ten-Cent Jimmy. Interesting. What did he do?" Quentin asked.

"Ten-Cent Jimmy tried to maintain the integrity of the Union while favoring the South bringing about the Civil War."

"He liked flashy clothes," Alice added.

"Nice of you, Mr. Caruso. I don't like to stand out. I'm just a little boy who wears simple clothes that get torn up all the time," Q said after hearing that Buchanan had loved clothes.

Alice whispered to Ethel, "Johnson was the worst president."

"How about the big-talker president?" Frost said. "President Harrison made a hundred and forty speeches as a president, and he loved collecting baseball scorecards."

"Baseball scorecards," Quentin said, suddenly interested. "I love baseball. If I win I would want all of us to play baseball on the White House lawn."

"Kid Gloves Harrison improved trade between the US and Latin America," the president said.

“Kid Gloves Harrison?” Q asked.

“Because he was wearing kids’ gloves to protect his hands from infection,” the president said.

“Yuck. Thank you but no, Mr. Frost,” Q said. “But could you show me some of his baseball scorecards if you find some?” he added, and looked at Houdini. “How about you, Mr. Houdini? Do you want to trade?”

“Quentin, you are immature. Father just said to keep your president,” Alice reminded Q.

Q shrugged his shoulders.

Q was stubborn and persisted in getting another president no matter what his father said.

“I still have to pick a card,” Houdini said, winking.

“Goody, goody,” Q said. “Will you trade with me if you get Jefferson?”

Loretta squawked as Caruso and Robert Frost approached the entrance to the attic.

“Sure, but Loretta doesn’t seem happy about that.”

“Loretta is not screaming at you,” Quentin said.

“Oh! You are right,” Houdini said on his way to Hathi.

“I guess Andrew Johnson stays with you,” Alice said.

“All your presidents are better known than Andrew Johnson,” Q said, grudgingly looking at his card.

“Not all,” Alice said. “Buchanan is not well known either.”

“Don’t admit defeat before the battle starts,” the president said. “Give it all you have got. You can’t shirk difficulties—to have success, you need to learn to overcome difficulties. It builds character. And character says a lot about the worth of a person.”

“Well said, Father,” Alice said, admiring her father.

However, the president’s wise words didn’t console young Q.

Q looked forlorn.

"Three more players need to pick their card: Houdini, Michelle, and David," Q said pensively, ignoring his father's good advice. "Maybe Jefferson is still possible."

"Why are you still thinking Jefferson?" Alice said, rolling her eyes, disbelieving. "You can't switch—period."

"Why not?"

"Because you just can't," Ethel, said agreeing with her big sister.

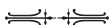
"Because Father said you can't," Alice said vehemently. "You have to learn to overcome difficulties."

"I'm just curious. That's all. David is not here, so let's see which president Michelle gets," Quentin said, perking up. "Michelle, it's your turn. Maybe you will get Jefferson."

Michelle smiled at him.

"You are so stubborn," Alice said.

"He just won't listen," Ethel said.



There was complete silence in the room. Everyone's eyes were now on Michelle and Quentin.

Michelle approached the elephant, lifted its trunk, pulled out a card, read it, and, looking at Quentin, sadly said, "Sorry, Quentin, I didn't get Jefferson. I got Millard Fillmore."

Quentin said, "By buzzard, I was counting on you Michelle."

Michelle looked at Quentin and said, "I don't know anything about this president either. Why don't we help each other?"

"I'm not sure how," Quentin said. "I don't know anything about him either."

“Millard Fillmore was the cat president and a Good Samaritan. He had a big heart for animals and created the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in Buffalo. He also had two ponies, named Mason and Dickson.”

“Really! I love animals, especially horses and ponies,” Michelle said, smiling. “I’ll get along well with president Millard Fillmore.”

“As I recall, there is an encyclopedia listing all there is to know about the presidents on the shelf next to the entrance,” the president said, pointing to the shelf.

“Oh good,” Michelle said, looking at Quentin. “That’s what I need. Quentin, let’s go look together.”

But Quentin only had eyes for the entrance to the attic.

“Sorry, Michelle. I can’t right now,” Q said, walking right by the shelf where the president’s book was. “I need to check the attic.”

“Father didn’t give the word to go in yet,” Alice said.

Not paying attention to Alice, with his card in hand he rushed to the door.

“I have my ticket now,” Q said.

He tried to open the door, but it wouldn’t budge. “Strange. I have my ticket, and it still doesn’t work.” Q said, frustrated.

“Mr. Houdini, now I know you put a spell. Everyone said I needed a card to enter, I have a card, and I still can’t.”

“I did not put a spell,” Houdini said, ready to get a card from Hathi.

“Really?” Q said, disbelieving. “You didn’t?”

“No,” Houdini said.

“Come, Houdini, let’s have a trick,” Henry James said. “I

love magic and so does everyone else. We would love to see another one of your tricks.”

“I’d love to, but I’m on a magic break because you see it’s my turn to get a card from Hathi.”

“Too bad,” James said, grinning.

Quentin came back to Hathi and anxiously waited to see what Houdini would draw. He really wanted to win, and he needed Jefferson to win.

Houdini lifted the curious elephant’s trunk and picked a card.

“Martin van Buren,” Houdini said, laughing, winking at the president.

“Oh! Well! Too bad for me, Mr. Houdini,” Quentin said. “But I still have a chance...David.”

“You are right. There is still a chance,” Houdini said, winking.

“Oh, Quentin! Why don’t you follow the program?” Alice said, frustrated.

“David is my last hope,” Q muttered.

“How apropos,” the president said. “Houdini, the world-famous magician meets Martin van Buren, the little magician.”

“With that much power, let me see what I can do,” Houdini said, winking at Quentin.

Houdini looked at the door as he whispered magical words; the door opened.

“You did it! You did it!” Q said excitedly.

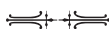
At the door, Frost and Caruso appeared with their findings.

“How did you get in?” Quentin asked. “You were just here a minute ago.”

“Magic,” Frost said.

Quentin looked at Houdini with a puzzled look.

“I had nothing to do with it,” Houdini said, laughing.



“We found some interesting things,” Caruso said, holding President Buchanan’s inaugural vest and an inkwell, and then he pointed at a small log cabin, a cloth with a picture of a log cabin, a ribbon with the words Harrison, Our Country’s Hope, and a poster Robert Frost was holding.

“President Buchanan made a splashy entrance at his inauguration wearing this satin vest decorated with the states,” the president told the magnetized group—except Quentin, who was more interested in the objects Robert Frost was holding.

“A log cabin?” Quentin asked.

“Yes, the log cabin was a smart tactic used by Harrison to attract voters who wanted to identify with a war hero who shared their down-to-earth values.”

“Did he live in one?” Quentin asked.

“He did for a very short while,” the president said.

“Father, wouldn’t it be fun to have a log cabin?” Q asked.

“Yes, it would be fun,” the president answered. “Maybe we will make a trip to North Dakota and visit Maltese Cross Cabin.”

Then the president turned to Robert Frost and said, laughing, “Robert, by the way, the log cabin was Tippecanoe’s—William Henry Harrison, grandfather of the Big Talker, Ben Harrison. Ben Harrison was the one who loved baseball.”

“Oops!” Frost said. “Quentin, I did get Tippecanoe. Does William Henry Harrison still interest you?”

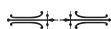
Quentin thought for a minute and said, “I like the log cabin stuff, but no, I’m OK for now.”

“Just like the people who wanted to elect William Harrison president, let’s keep the ball rolling and play the game,” the president said, walking to the attic’s entrance and opening the door.

“Are we starting the game without David?” Q asked.

“No, we should wait,” the president said.

CHAPTER 6



SINE QUA NON

“Everyone ready? Everyone ready?” Loretta repeated.
“Ready for what?” Edith Wharton said, wondering if an animal was going to attack.

Archie had convinced his father to have Eli stay as long as he kept a close eye on him. He also promised to keep Eli quiet. And so far, Eli had ignored Loretta’s squawking. Eli loved action, and there was plenty to be had. He flew to the sign above the entrance, but then decided to sit on the moose’s head. “Look here, look here.”

“Now Eli is talking,” Edith Wharton said, laughing this time.

“Great vantage point,” Frost said, looking at Eli on the moose’s head.

Quentin stopped cold at the entrance, staring at the moose holding a sign above the door. He wasn’t paying attention to Eli but at the sign.

“What’s wrong, Quentin?” Houdini asked. “After all this, aren’t you going in?”

“Father, Father, oh no!” Quentin said.

“What’s wrong, Quentee?” the president asked, concerned.

“What happened to my sign, Sine Qua Non?” Quentin said, upset.

“‘Sine qua non,’ do you know what that means?” Michelle asked Ethel.

“No, I never pay attention to Quentin’s signs.”

“Well, ‘sine qua non’ is a Latin phrase that means a thing that’s absolutely necessary,” the president told Michelle.

“Remember, Father, that’s why I chose that saying. Playing in the attic is an absolutely necessary thing when you live in the White House. Wouldn’t you agree, Father?” Q asked.

“I certainly do,” the president answered. “But the circumstances were such that it was thought fitting to change the sign. Just for today.”

“Oh!” Q said. “Just for today.”

“Why is the attic a necessary thing?” Henry James asked Quentin. “Can’t you play anywhere in the White House?”

“Yes. But the attic is where we, Roosevelt children, rule,” Quentin answered.

“Ha ha. Wonderful,” Kipling said. “A children’s kingdom.”

“Now I’m very curious. What’s behind the door?” London asked mischievously.

“Everything imaginable,” Quentin answered, adding, “Play is only limited by our imagination.”

“Bravo! Well said!” Kipling said with an admiring voice.

“I can’t wait,” Michelle said, unable to contain her

excitement, stretching her head to try to get a glimpse, but the door was closed.

"So, Father, where did my sign Sine Qua Non go?" Quentin asked.

"It's sitting right inside the attic entrance," the president answered. "Sorry, you were not around. Archie suggested we make a change to go with the game. He thought you would be OK with the temporary change."

"If Archie suggested it," Q said, looking sad, "it's good."

"I know you and Archie think alike. Don't worry—it's only for the duration of this game. We thought *Non ducor, duco*, 'I am not led, I lead,' is more apropos since we are playing the president's game. Don't you agree?"

"I see," Q said, adding, laughing, "Father, you lead, I follow."

He soon forgot about his sign Sine Qua Non.

However, Q was still not happy with having President Andrew Johnson as his partner. He surveyed the scene. He looked at everyone around, hoping to start a rebellion, but everyone looked happy. No one looked sad. Everyone was into playing the president's game with the cards they had gotten, even the Belle of Washington. He had no ally.

David was his last chance, though. Should he wait for him at the entrance of the attic?

Quentin walked to the entrance and stood there quietly looking at his card, no longer in a hurry to enter.

"Q, have you changed your mind about going into the attic?" the president asked. "Are you upset about the sign?"

"Of course not. I'm waiting for David." Quentin replied.

The president asked, "Hmm, by the way, what happened to David? I thought he was following you. Weren't you together earlier?"

“He was following me, but he needed to talk to Archie. He went looking for him. He said he was going to the attic. I don’t know why he wouldn’t be there already,” Q answered, uncomfortable.

“Me,” Archie said, surprised. “Why?”

“I’m not sure,” Q said, telling a little lie.

“Interesting—I never saw him walk by,” the president gave Quentin a dubious look. “What makes you think he is there, then?”

Q shrugged his shoulders. “I am not sure he is there. Just a guess.”

The president opened the door and looked in.

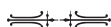
“I don’t see anyone. I think you know more than you let on.”

Michelle couldn’t wait any longer. She peeked into the attic at the same time the president was looking in. All she saw was a huge dark space. She couldn’t see David either.

“I don’t see him in the attic,” Michelle whispered to Q.

“I know he is there. It’s a big space with lots of different rooms. He must have gotten lost. We will find him. Don’t worry.”

CHAPTER 7



WHAT HAPPENED TO DAVID?

“Where do you think David went?” Michelle asked Quentin.

In the meantime, as soon as David had left the elevator, he had quickly walked up a flight of stairs and disappeared.

He found himself in a small hall with several doors to choose from. He was tempted to open all of them to see what was behind. Would he find bears, moose, bison, ghosts?

“Should I or shouldn’t I...? Hmm, very tempting.”

But he reminded himself he was on a mission. He had to get help. He reluctantly continued to the end of the hall, where there were two doors side by side. He chose the door to the right and opened it.

“This can’t be the attic. There is no one here.”

He looked around.

“Quentin did say the door on the right at the end of the hall. This room is small with walls covered with shelves

filled with books, except for one shelf that stood empty. This can't be it."

He looked at the door.

"How could this be the wrong door?"

He looked at the hallway.

"I did exactly what Quentin said."

Just as he was about to leave, Jonathan slipped out of his hand.

"Jonathan, Jonathan, where are you?"

He saw something move out of the corner of his eyes.

"Jonathan!"

He bent down to grab him.

Trying to pick up Jonathan, who quickly scuttled away, he bumped his head on a shelf that jiggled on its hinges.

"Come back, Jonathan," David murmured. "Where did you go so fast?"

Jonathan had disappeared.

As he raised his head to see where Jonathan could have gone, the shelf lifted up.

"Is there a hole he could have gone into?"

Looking for a hole, he discovered that the lower shelf was loose, and with a bit of jiggling, it could be lifted up as if it were on hinges.

"Weird," he said, running his hand along the molding that supported the shaking shelf. He felt an indentation. "What's this about?" he asked, pressing his fingers hard into it.

The shelf moved, and the wall opened. David plunged head first into a dark space tumbling down the hole.

"Where am I?" David said, trying to get his bearing. "It's so dark in here."

He couldn't tell how big the room was and what it was about.

“Wow! What do you know? A secret room,” he exclaimed, hearing the door closed above him.

He tried to stand up, but he hit his head on the low ceiling.

“Small space. This isn’t for people. I can’t see anything. How am I going to get out of here?”

Crawling, he touched all the walls around him until he felt a door. He pushed as hard as he could, but it wouldn’t budge. He kicked the door, but the door wouldn’t open.

“Could this door have a secret?” he asked, feeling his way around some more. “Yuck, something smells like rotten food.”

Feeling his way around the dark space, he found something.

“Whew! What’s that?” he said, touching something damp and slimy.

“I need to get out of here,” he added, finally finding a bulge on the door.

“A doorknob,” he said, turning it.

Nothing.

He pushed it.

Nothing.

“I am trapped,” he said, his heart pounding, shaking the complacent door knob.

Then he pulled the knob and held it.

He heard a rumbling noise.

“Something is happening.”

The door quickly opened outward, squeaking.

“Wow! Strange, this door is old, like the ancient Greeks,” he said, losing grip of the knob and sliding headfirst into another dark space, landing on his hands and stomach.

Startled, he pulled himself up, first sitting, then standing up.

“This room is bigger. I can stand up, but I still can’t see anything.”

He slowly walked to the right and bumped into the wall, then veered to the left and bumped into the wall again. “I’m stuck.”

And then, as he thought there was no way out, he hit space.

“No walls. No nothing, just air. This room is bigger,” he said, waving his arms around.

Squinting, his eyes hoping to see something, he said, “Where am I? I still can’t see.”

He cautiously walked forward. Stretching his arms outward, he was now feeling walls on both sides. “It feels like a hallway.”

“Maybe this leads to the attic,” he said, hopeful.

He tripped on something protruding and fell down flat on the ground.

“What’s this? “David said, touching the lump.

“It’s a latch,” he exclaimed.

Jiggling the latch, he said, “This has to be a trapdoor.”

Click, click, click.

Holding the latch, he felt the door move a little.

“Yep,” he said. “That’s good. I unlatched the door.”

There were three holes by the latch. He put his fingers into them and easily lifted the door. “How about that?”

He sat on the edge of the opening.

He kicked the ground. *Clank, clank, clank.*

“No steps.”

He ventured forward a little.

“Let’s see where that goes.”

And down he went, sliding down a short distance in a storm of metal noise.

"Well! That was quick," he said, hitting the ground trying to stand up. He couldn't.

"I must be between floors. This is some kind of trap. I have to get out of here. They will never find me."

He crawled and crawled inside a long tubular cavity until he reached a wall.

"A small door," he said, pushing it outward.

He slid out and sprang on his feet.

"Fun," he said, sweating.

"Another room," he added.

"Will I ever get to the attic?" he added, bumping into a door.

He turned the knob, and he found himself into a small space, blinded by light coming from an opaque glass. He was inside a wardrobe with a glass door.

"Finally some light," he said.

He came closer to the glass. He could see Quentin and Michelle with Jack standing by the president and Kipling surrounded by the rest of the group.

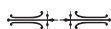
He had made it.

How? He had no idea. He had been through a maze of rooms, between floors, walking and sliding.

Scary at times, but lots of fun too.

He let out a loud sigh of relief. "Here at last."

He put his hands on the door and pushed it.



A noise was heard at a dark-brown cabinet next to the entrance door to the attic.

Jack's fine ears detected a noise. He was the first one on the scene barking.

"Who is there? Who is there?" Loretta screamed.

"Here goes Loretta again!" Edith Wharton said, amused.

"And Eli is keeping an eye on her, not saying a word," James said.

"Who is there? Who is there?" Loretta repeated.

"Don't worry, dear," Henry James said. "Loretta is a talker."

"You mean a screamer," Edith Wharton said, laughing.

"What did Jack find this time?" Michelle asked Q.

The president walked to the cabinet and opened the door as David was pushing the door, falling flat on his face in front of everyone.

David, disheveled, quickly got up on his feet, smiling. "I made it. Hi, everyone."

Everyone looked at David, stunned.

"David!" the president exclaimed, surprised. "I'm glad you are here."

"My, my, Houdini, is that one of your tricks?" Henry James asked, laughing.

"True magic," Houdini said, winking.

Then David walked to Michelle, "How in the world did you get here so fast?"

Quentin didn't let Michelle answer and quickly interjected, "You found your way."

"Yep, but I didn't find Archie."

"You were really looking for Archie," Alice said, surprised.

"Yes," David said, puzzled.

"You found one of those never-used rooms, didn't you?" the president said, laughing.

"I did. I lost my way looking for the attic," David said truthfully. "I never thought there would be secret passages in the White House."

"Secret passages in the White House," Kipling said. "This is getting better and better."

The president raised his eyebrows at the mention of secret passages.

"Love it," Jack London said, his eyes twinkling. "It sounds like adventures to be had."

"Did you encounter any ghosts?" Edith Wharton asked.

"Nope," David answered. "Just dust and slimy, smelly stuff."

"To be clear, what Q calls secret passages are in fact storage areas," the president said.

"Father, our help James Amos said there are secret passages," Q said, "and so did the waitress Catherine Daley."

"To amuse you," the president said, uncomfortable.

"Which way did you go after you went up the stairs?" Michelle asked David, puzzled.

"I went the way Quentin said. I'm not sure what happened. But what an adventure! How about you? How did you get here before me?"

"Right after you left, I jiggled the knob, and the elevator started going up. Maybe you should have waited."

"I'm glad I didn't. I had fun. I wish you had been there though."

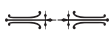
The president eyed Quentin with suspicion.

"Well, I'm sure you would have loved it," David continued. "It was incredible going through secret passages."

"Sh," Michelle whispered to David. "Don't say 'secret passages.'"

"OK," David told her.

He added, whispering, "But they were, you know."



"I don't see Jonathan—where is he?" Quentin muttered, looking around.

"Oops! I was going to tell you. I lost him when I was looking for the attic."

Looking at David, Quentin breathed a sigh of relief. David had not said a word about the elevator.

"It's OK. He is around, I'm sure."

But the president had overhead. He again looked at Quentin and said, "Jonathan?"

"Jack found Jonathan downstairs," Q said. "David had it but lost it."

"I'm so sorry, Quentin. Can we go look for it?" David asked, contrite.

"Where exactly did you lose him?"

"I'm not quite sure where I was. All I can tell you, it was a small room filled with books."

"There are lots of those," Kermit said.

"Father, should I go look for it?" Archie asked.

Just as he was saying that, Jack ran to the cabinet one more time.

Quentin was very happy about the diversion. He was hoping to keep his escapade in the elevator a secret for a bit longer.

"Jack, what are you barking at?" Quentin asked. "There is none there. Everybody is here. So hush."

"Oh oh!" squawked Loretta.

"Woof, woof," barked Jack.

"I'm sure Jack is trying to tell us something," Edith Wharton said, able to communicate with dogs.

Jack insisted, tramping on his four legs in front of the now famous cabinet.

"What is it with this cabinet?" Edith Wharton asked.

"Very mysterious," Henry James said.

"We should name the cabinet," Frost said.

"What?" Quentin asked.

"The magic cabinet," Houdini answered.

"I like it," Quentin said. "The magic cabinet."

Q stared at Jack and wondered why he was barking at the cabinet again. So he went with Jack to the cabinet.

Jack did what he always did when he smelled something interesting. He barked furiously and scratched at the door.

"Come, Jack, what are you trying to tell us?" the president said.

Quentin opened the door of the cabinet and started laughing.

"What's so funny?"

Quentin bent down and picked up Jonathan. "Found the escape artist. David, maybe you never lost it after all."

"Jonathan," Ethel said, fondly petting the little animal.

"Hold him tight."

"I will," Q said. "Mr. Houdini, did you make Jonathan reappear?"

"A magician never reveals his secret," Houdini said.

"More tricks up your sleeve?" Churchill asked the magician.

"Later," Houdini answered.

"Oh good, now that everyone is here and in good spirits, let's start the game," the president said.

"Game?" David asked.

"We are playing the president's game," Quentin said.

"You need to pick a card. The card will have a president's name on it," Archie said.

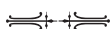
"That's your ticket to the attic, where we will play the game," Quentin said.

"You can't go in without it," Ethel insisted.

"You forgot to say how you play the game," Alice said.

“Oh right,” Quentin said. “We are playing a game remembering our presidents.”

“You need to find as many objects that belonged to the president named on your card,” Alice said.



“I have been waiting for you to pick a card,” Quentin said.

“How do I get a card?”

“Come with me,” Q told David.

Quentin was very excited. David was his last chance.

“I hope you get Jefferson,” Q said, hoping.

“Why?”

“Jefferson is my favorite president.”

“It sounds like a treasure hunt,” David said.

“Exactly,” the president said. “Whoever gets the most objects wins and decides the next game.”

“I want to play baseball with everyone here,” Quentin said. “Even you, Father. I know you don’t like baseball, but maybe just this once, you could.”

“The winner gets to pick the game, and, yes, everyone will play,” the president reaffirmed.

“Great idea, Quentin,” David said, standoffish. “If I win, I’d want to explore the secret...”

Michelle bumped his elbow.

“...forgotten rooms,” David said to the amused look of the president.

He was impatient to go explore more secret passages, now wishing they could without playing the game.

But the real reason he wasn’t into the president’s game was he felt stupid not to know much about the presidents, and he didn’t want anyone to know that, not even Michelle.

The only president he knew a lot about was Jefferson, lucky for him, a little. He also knew something on those who signed the Declaration of Independence and, of course, President Theodore Roosevelt.

"You are good in history," Michelle said, nudging him out of his reverie. "You could win and decide the next game."

"You think so," David said, smiling uncomfortably.

"I can't wait to see which president you get," Q said, walking David to the elephant. "Hathi, the elephant will give you your president. Just lift his trunk."

"Hathi?" David asked. "Isn't that's Mowgli's friend?"

"Yes," Kipling said, standing next to Hathi.

He had been waiting for David. When David got to the elephant, he told the elephant very somberly, "Hathi, do you job."

David lifted the trunk.

"Here, let me help," Kipling told David as he was about to get the card.

As the elephant spewed out the card, both got to it at the same time, and the card slipped from their hands to the ground.

Kipling was first to get to the card.

"Your card," he told David, deftly switching cards without anyone noticing.

David looked at the card and smiled. What a relief!

"Well, which president did you get?" Quentin asked.

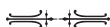
David looked at everyone and dramatically read out loud, "Jefferson."

"I knew it. I had a feeling you might get him," Quentin, excited, told David.

Someone had seen Kipling switch cards.

Houdini winked at Kipling, saying, "Magic."

Kipling smiled. He never revealed his president. No one asked. Kipling was too busy storing future stories in his brain.



"David gets my favorite president," Quentin said, going from excited to pouting. "So unfair!"

"I'm sorry, Quentin, but why unfair? What president did you get?" David asked.

"Andrew Johnson."

"Don't you like him?"

"No. All I know of him is he kept a rat as a pet in his bedroom."

"Hmm, so sorry, Q. I don't know much about Andrew Johnson. I wish I could make you feel better."

"I know how you could," Q said.

"Quentiiiiin," Alice said with a reproving look.

David didn't make much of Alice's calling out Quentin.

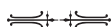
"I can't blame you. Jefferson was a great president. I know lots about him," David added, beaming. "He was not only a politician but a scientist, and because I love science, Jefferson is my favorite president."

"I wanted Jefferson because I know everything about him," Q said, fibbing.

"You do?"

"Well, I know he was a great president."

CHAPTER 8



BONES IN THE EAST ROOM

“He was a great politician, but you know what I liked most about Jefferson?” David asked Q.

“No.”

“He was fascinated with fossils and mammoths. Friends used to send him mammoths’ teeth as big as a man’s fist. He also gave some away to people here and in France.”

“Why did he give them away?” Quentin asked.

“To show the world that besides the buffalo, there used to be huge animals living in America,” David said. “Like Great-Claw.”

“Great-Claw, what’s that?” Quentin asked.

“A nickname Jefferson gave a sloth-like mammal,” the president answered.

“What is a sloth?” Quentin asked.

“A modern sloth is a furry animal, usually the size of a medium-sized dog with long claws, which makes it difficult for them to walk. So they spend most of their

time hanging upside down. They are the slowest animal on earth. Jefferson's prehistoric sloth was as big as an elephant."

"Wow! Can you imagine an elephant hanging upside down?" Quentin said, laughing at the thought.

"Even though they are related, nobody knows if Great-Claw hung upside down. They both have powerful forelimbs and curved claws," the president said.

"Jefferson thought he had found a lion like animal at first," David said, wanting to impress Q.

"Really! A lion?" Quentin said, curious. "Did it look like one?"

"No. Remember, David, Jefferson never said it was a lion, even though he was hoping to find a huge American kind of lion. When he measured the largest claw of the animal, it was seven point five inches, compared to the lion's one point four inches—and three times as large a lion. He realized he had found a huge animal that had lived in North America."

"What does this huge animal, Great-Claw, look like?" Quentin asked, fascinated.

"To me, it looked like a huge ten-foot-tall bear with a tail," David said.

"Ha ha," the president laughed. "It does look like a bear with a snout, huge jaw, and peg-like teeth."

"I get it. Are they still around?"

"They disappeared ten thousand years ago."

"Where did Great-Claw live?" Q asked.

"West Virginia," the president said.

"So Jefferson discovered Great-Claw in West Virginia?"

"No, someone named Colonel Stuart sent him the large fossilized bones of an unknown animal he found in

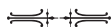
Virginia,” the president answered. “Jefferson called the big animal Great-Claw.”

“How about that? And I thought I knew everything about Jefferson,” Q said.

“How can you know everything about him? You are only five,” Alice remarked.

“Alice,” the president said, “as a five-year-old, Quentin knows more about Jefferson than most people.”

Alice shrugged her shoulders.



“You know, he was also fascinated with mastodons and thought they still existed in the West,” David said.

“He certainly did,” the president said.

“A ‘mastodon’—another big word. What’s a mastodon?” Quentin asked.

“A cousin of the elephant—a prehistoric animal with tusks, flapping ears, and a long nose.”

“An elephant?”

“A cousin of the elephant. People would send him the bones of these other huge animals. He would then spend his time puzzling the bones together on the floor of the White House.”

“By golly, can you imagine that? A president playing with bones in the White House?”

“Do you know people called him Mr. Mammoth?”

“No. Jefferson, Mr. Mammoth! That’s funny,” Q said.

“Yep, and do you know the East Room was called the Bone Room or Mastodon Room?” David asked.

“Really! Maybe some of these bones were found close to the White House,” Q said.

“No. They were found in Kentucky,” the president said.

“Kentucky! Father, can we go to Kentucky when you are not busy? I’d love to see this big animal’s bones.”

“You mean the mastodon.”

“Yes.”

“How about going to West Virginia, where *Megalongyx* bones can be seen?” the president suggested. “I know they are not mastodons, but the *Megalongyx* is big too, and just as fascinating.”

“What’s a *Me-ga-lo-nyx*?” Q asked. “David, do you know?”

“Yes, it’s a giant sloth.”

“*Megalongyx* in Greek means ‘giant claw,’” the president said.

“I see.”

Quentin was all ears.

“Jefferson called the giant sloth a *Megalongyx*,” David said.

“You mean Great-Claw is a sloth and a *Megalongyx*?” Q said.

“Yes,” the president said, proud of Q.

“So could there be bones somewhere hidden in the White House?” David asked.

“I don’t think so...you see, the British burned the White House in 1814.”

“The White House was burned...That’s so sad,” Michelle said. “Was there anything left?”

“Only the exterior walls survived, and they still carry black scorches,” the president said. “So whatever is in the White House today was bought or brought back by presidents after the 1814 fire. If there are any fossils here, I doubt they would be mastodons unless they were given by friends after 1814. But you never know...”

"Too bad—that would be fun to go mastodon-bone hunting," David said.

"Didn't Jefferson give some bones to his friend Madison?" Archie asked.

"Yes," David said.

"He did!" Q said, surprised.

"It's worth investigating, isn't it," the president said laughing.

"Let me know if you need help on this escapade," Jack London said. "I'm always up for an adventure."

"Who would get a point if bones are found?" Alice asked. "Madison or Jefferson?"

"Interesting dilemma," the president said, raising his eyebrows as if seriously thinking about it.

Q and Archie were already plotting ahead. That would be something the White House gang would have fun doing another day.

"We can still look. Like Father said, you never know," Quentin said. "But, David, tell me more about Jefferson and the bones he used to put together in the East Room."

"When General Clark found fossil bones in Kentucky, he shipped them to Jefferson. Jefferson spread three hundred specimen bones in the Mammoth Room and tried to put them together to see how big the animal was."

"Was there a big head?"

"Kind of. There were pieces of the head, jawbones with teeth, ribs, very long ten-foot tusks, a huge horn, and bones of the foot."

"Wow! Huge," Q said in awe. "I can just picture all the bones on the floor, trying to put them together just like a puzzle. That would be so much fun, wouldn't it?"

“It would be,” David said, excited at the thought. “Let’s find some bones and put them back together.”

“OK. What else did he do after he was done with the puzzle?”

“After studying them, Jefferson sent some of the bones to France, and there Cuvier, a French scientist, found that the difference between the elephant and the mammoth was a bulge on the tooth that looked like the breast of a woman, so he called the mammoth a ‘mastodont’ for bubbly toothed. That’s where the name ‘mastodon’ comes from,” the president said.

“He named the animal a mastodont because of a bump on the teeth?” Q asked.

“Yes,” David answered.

“Why did he send the bones to France?”

“Good question, Quentee. Because he felt he owed it to the Europeans since the French were the first to collect the huge fossils bones in Big Bone Lick, way back in 1739, and Jefferson knew their naturalists were interested in studying them,” the president answered. “A French captain, Charles le Moyne de Longueil, called the area in Kentucky Big Bone Lick for extinct elephants, mammoth, and mastodon.”

“Wasn’t there a French naturalist that said anything in America was small compared to the Old World because of the conditions of the environment?” David asked.

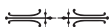
“Yes, Comte de Buffon did.” the president said, impressed by David’s knowledge.

“Jefferson didn’t like that, and he wanted to prove to the rest of the world that America’s prehistoric animals were just as big as the Old World prehistoric animals—for example, that mastodons and *Megalonyx* were just as big as the Old World counterparts.”

"*Megalongy*...I love big words," Quentin said, pumping his chest like a big man.

"Is that word in the dictionary?" Archie asked.

"Why not! You can find any word in a dictionary," Alice said haughtily.



"I'm impressed, young man," the president told David. "Studies are important in the formation of character. Indifference in studying is almost certain to mean inability to get on in other walks of life."

"I study hard, but it helps that my mother is a zoologist," David said. "She knows everything about animals. I love learning from her."

"His mother also says Jefferson was a Renaissance man like Leonardo da Vinci," Michelle said.

"Interesting...I can see that. Jefferson was into math, music, invention, architecture, law writing, astronomy." The president chuckled. "He was a great politician, but he loved science more and was indeed obsessed with collecting fossils and bones. And, David, you are right: Jefferson wanted to prove that America was a 'land full of big and beautiful things' and show the world that America was not degenerate, and that it had a place in the Western world."

"Mr. Roosevelt, Jefferson and you shared the same love for natural science," David told the president, pointing at the moose and other stuffed animals adorning the room.

"Ha ha," the president said. "Interesting comparison—we certainly do."

"Father, David is right," Alice said proudly. "Didn't you at some point want to become a natural history teacher?"

“Yes, but like my father, I wanted to help people,” the president said. “And the best way to do that was through public service.”

Quentin was looking at his card and at the entrance to the attic, not paying attention to Alice, impatient to go in.

“Father?” Quentin said. “But, Father, don’t you agree that Jefferson did much more than play with bones?”

“He certainly did,” the president said. “I talk a lot about how Jefferson as a politician dedicated his life in making America a symbol of democracy for the world to see. He believed in political and religious freedom for all. He...”

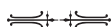
“David, please, won’t you trade?” Q asked David, interrupting his father.

“Quentin, the die is cast,” the president said, ruffling Quentin’s hair. “It wouldn’t be square, and it would be unfair for David to switch. It wouldn’t be decent of you. Besides, you might learn from David. For example, didn’t you just learn about Jefferson’s fascination with the mammoth? Remember, a boy in order to become a great man must make up his mind not merely to overcome one thousand obstacles but to win in spite of a thousand defeats.”

“But, Father, there is not much to learn from Andrew Johnson.”

“Every president has made a contribution. Every president leaves a legacy. You need to find out what was Andrew Johnson’s.”

CHAPTER 9



CAN WE SWITCH PRESIDENT?

Everyone was waiting at the entrance of the attic looking at their cards and discussing their presidents. Loretta was very quiet, and Jack had settled on a pillow by the cabinet, leisurely lounging watching the action around him with one eye open.

Quentin, wriggling from one foot to the other, looked at his father and at David.

“Remember, Quentin, Jefferson not only was a politician but a scientist,” David said.

“Just like my father,” Quentin said proudly.

“Did you know he studied how to turn salt water into fresh water?” Michelle asked Quentin.

“No,” Quentin replied. “Do you know he is responsible for the most important document in world history?”

“Yes,” David said.

“The world?” Michelle said skeptically. “Hmm, are you sure?”

“Yes. The Declaration of Independence is the most important document not only of our country but the world,” Quentin replied.

“Our country, yes,” Michelle said. “But the world?”

“Quentin is right. It is one of the most important documents in world history,” the president agreed. “It led to the Revolutionary War, and that changed history.”

“Hmm,” Michelle said. “How about the Constitution?”

“Father, is the Constitution the most important document?”

“They are both very important documents,” the president said. “They both played a role in forming our history. The Declaration of Independence made us free to be our own country. The Constitution is the framework of our government and set the laws of the land.”

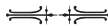
“Father, didn’t you say Jefferson wanted a Bill of Rights?”

“Yes, he told his friend James Madison that the Constitution needed a written Bill of Rights.”

“OK, there you go, David. I know that about Jefferson. But did you know Jefferson had something to do with the Bill of Rights document?” Q asked.

“Yes, but he didn’t write it,” Michelle said. “James Madison did.”

“Excellent, Michelle,” the president said.



Quentin said, “Oh OK. How about...do you know the Declaration of Independence was written with iron gall ink?”

“No,” David said, not giving Michelle the time to answer. “I have never heard of that. Is that a special ink?”

"What's iron gall ink?" Michelle asked.

"It's ink made from acorn," Q answered.

"Ink made from acorn!" Michelle repeated.

"Yep!" Q responded, proud of his knowledge.

"True, but most iron gall ink is made with iron salts and tannic acid," the president added.

"It never crossed my mind to think of where ink comes from," Michelle said.

"The Chinese made the best ink, and it came from pine sap made from old trees," the president said.

"In India, ink is made from burnt bones and tar," Churchill intercepted, still waiting at the entrance.

"Yikes, burnt bones," Michelle said, disgusted.

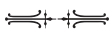
"That doesn't sound too good," Q said. "I like ink made from acorn better, don't you?"

"Yes," Michelle agreed.

"Jack and Loretta are resting getting ready for the action to come," David said.

"So is Eli. What happened to him?" Michelle asked, not seeing Eli.

"I just saw Archie going in the attic with him a minute ago," Q said.

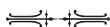


"Do you know Jefferson had a pet bird that kept him company while he worked in the Mammoth Room?" David asked Quentin.

"No," Q answered. "Was it a parrot?"

"No, it was a mockingbird named Dick," Michelle answered. "Dick liked to sing while perched on his shoulder."

"I have seen and heard mockingbirds around the White House," Q said. "My father loves them."



The president was listening to Quentin and David talking but wasn't making any move to start the game, so interesting he found their exchange.

"Let's see how many things we can find that were invented or designed by Jefferson," David said, impatient to play the game and find objects belonging to Jefferson. "Do you know he invented a dumbwaiter because he didn't want to disturb the servant at night when he wanted a snack?"

"Yes, that I know because we have one in the White House made according to his plan."

"Can we see it?" Michelle asked.

"Father, when are we going in?" Quentin asked, and not waiting for a reply answered Michelle: "There is no time right now."

"Is the dumbwaiter big enough to hold people?" David asked Quentin.

"Oh no! I'm not getting in it," Michelle said, remembering the elevator.

"Ha ha ha!" Quentin laughed and told David, "Only if you were the size of a bottle of wine."

"He also invented a little cupboard with shelves loaded with dishes and food that spun from one room into another," David continued.

"I have seen that somewhere, but I didn't know Jefferson invented that cupboard with shelves that spin from one room into another," Quentin said.

"He also designed a cupboard which when he touched a spring, two doors would open to display water, wine, and desserts," Michelle said.

Both Michelle and David kept on and on mentioning Jefferson's inventions to the wide-eyed Quentin.

"You know a lot about Jefferson," Quentin said. "What else did Jefferson come up with?"

"There is much more. He invented a coat-and-breeches rack that turned like a turnstile, which impressed Mrs. Madison," David said.

"I didn't know he invented a coat rack," Quentin said. "There are lots of them in the attic. But I don't know if they were invented by Jefferson."

"Good. Maybe there is such a Jefferson's coat rack in the attic?"

"I have not seen one like the one you are talking about," Q said. "But maybe."

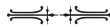
The interested president continued, listening to their interaction.

"Oh! How about, did you know Jefferson invented the polygraph?" David asked.

"Polygraph? I don't know what a polygraph is, but I bet you don't know he invented a macaroni machine because he liked macaroni and cheese."

Michelle and David laughed. "We loooove macaroni and cheese. Do you?"

"I dooo."



Quentin wanted to share something else he knew about Jefferson; he added, "Well, how about, do you know

Jefferson ordered Lewis and Clark to give a peace medal to the Indians?"

"No," Michelle answered.

"It had his picture on one side and the words Peace and Friendship on the other side," Quentin said.

The president finally decided to put a word in.

"Peace and friendship was symbolized by the image of a handshake and by the image of a crossed tomahawk and a peace pipe above," the president added, joining the trio. "One of the goals of the expedition was not only to establish a rapport with the natives but also to find a route across the continent."

"I knew that," Michelle said.

"But do you know that medal was the first to bear the image of a president?" the president continued.

"No."

"Why did he give the Native Americans a medal?" David asked.

"To continue the practice started by Europeans leaders to show goodwill to North American Indians," the president said.

"Father, have you ever gotten a medal for something?" Quentin asked.

"Not yet," he answered, laughing.

"Do you think there is a Jefferson peace medal somewhere in the attic?" David asked Quentin. "I'd love to see one."

"Maybe."

"Let's look for one," David said.

"OK."

"Did you know some historians say he really proposed the Lewis and Clark expedition for science purposes?" David retorted.

Impatient, he was pacing back and forth in front of the entrance waiting for a signal to go in.

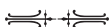
"No," Quentin answered. "Father said it was to be friends with the Indians. Why did Jefferson want an expedition for science?"

"He thought there were lots of mastodons living in the West, and he wanted to be first to find them alive so he kept the expedition a secret," David said. "I hope we find bones in the attic."

"When are we going in?" Michelle asked. "Are we waiting for someone?"

The president was now walking to the entrance.

Quentin, Michelle, and David followed him, excited to discover what was behind the door.



"Father, when are we going in?" Q repeated, impatient to go in.

"When you are ready. Are you ready?" the president asked Quentin.

"Yes, I'm going to try very hard to do my best and look for lots of things that belonged to Andrew Johnson," Quentin said. "I'm into the game, Father."

"That's the spirit. I'm impressed with all the great information that has been shared. Now it's time to start the treasure hunt," the president told all the children and everyone gathered in front of him. "By the way, a polygraph is an instrument invented by Jefferson to make copies of letters with his signature."

"He must have written a lot of letters for him to need a copying machine," Michelle said.

“Father, did Jefferson write a lot of letters?” Q asked, curious about why Jefferson would need a polygraph.

“He did,” the president answered. “Eighteen thousand six hundred and twenty-four letters.”

“Wow!” Michelle exclaimed. “Easy to guess who is going to win this game. David, you can find a possible eighteen thousand six hundred and twenty-four letters written by Jefferson.”

“Ha ha ha,” David laughed. “I’ll be here awhile.”

“Father, how many letters have you written?” Q asked his father.

“I’m not sure, but let me give you a rough estimate so far,” the president answered. “One hundred thousand letters.”

“Wow!” Michelle said, overwhelmed. “If someone had gotten a card with your name, they would have won for sure. Do you have a copy of all your letters?”

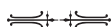
“Yes.”

“With the help of several polygraphs, I’m sure,” Michelle said, laughing.

“Is there a polygraph in the attic?” David asked.

“Let’s go find out. What are you waiting for? Let’s now go forward, find documents and other objects belonging to our presidents. Let’s relive history,” the president suggested.

CHAPTER 10



GHOSTS IN THE WHITE HOUSE

“Let the game begin,” the president, standing by the door, finally said, inviting everyone in.

Quentin’s spirit revived. He didn’t tell anyone he was more interested in looking for Jefferson’s inventions than Andrew Johnson’s documents. He liked Jefferson, and he wanted to learn as much as he could about him.

“By golly, the door opened easily this time.”

“It did for me,” Archie said.

Quentin turned and looked at Houdini.

“Houdini, I know you had something to do with the door not opening,” Quentin uttered with a snicker.

Houdini sniggering winked.

Quentin ran to the first chest and looked into it. He plunged his hand right in, throwing clothes all over the

place. "Dress-up time. Clothes I can find. But wait a minute, what exactly did Andrew Johnson wear?"

Bitzer was discreetly filming.

"He became president when Abraham Lincoln was killed," Kermit said. "So, I'm pretty sure they wore the same kind of clothes."

"You are right, Kermit, but Andrew Johnson was known as the Tennessee tailor. Andrew Johnson made his own suits. I'm sure he added his own originality," the president said, laughing. "There should be plenty of clothes wearing his name."

"Top hats and long frock coats," Ethel said.

"I found something," Quentin said, all excited, pulling a shiny jacket with a striking bow tie.

"You certainly did, Quentee," the president responded. "See. Never, never give up."

"Thanks, Father."

Michelle and David stood behind Houdini, Kipling, and Paderewski, impatient to start exploring the attic.

"A Kerntopf—I can't believe it," Paderewski exclaimed, running to the piano. "Mr. President, allow me to stay at the piano and entertain you while we are in the attic."

"Certainly—please feel free to play as long as you wish," the president responded.

"A Kerntopf?" Michelle said.

"It's a Polish company that made wonderful pianos. The Lion of Poland found Mary Abbie Fillmore's piano," the president said, smiling.

"Who is the Lion of Poland?" David asked.

"Our famous guest Paderewski. He is from Poland."

"Mary Abbie Fillmore!" Michelle said, surprised. "Was she the president's wife?"

"She was his daughter and White House hostess when the First Lady was sick. She loved to play the piano, the harp, and the guitar."

"Well, that's my president," Michelle said happily.

"The American Louis-Phillipe," the president said.

"Father, who is Louis-Phillipe?"

"He was the last king of France."

"Why was President Fillmore called Louis-Phillipe?"

"For his elegant fancy clothes and taste of expensive things and love of reading and books."

"Really, that info wasn't in the president's book," Michelle said, happy to learn about her president. "Maybe I'll find fancy clothes, books, and other expensive things that belonged to him."

"You already found one. The Kerntopf piano was an expensive object," the president said.

Michelle smiled. "I got a point then."

Paderewski, looking into another dimension, touched the piano with love.

"Play? Play? What should he play?" Robert Frost said, looking at a comb.

"Puccini, of course," Caruso suggested. "Please don't drop the comb. It will be bad luck, and something will happen to my voice."

"Such music," James said. "Heavenly."

"Beethoven for my stories," Kipling suggested.

Paderewski, lost in dreams said, "I owe a lot to Mr. Edward Kerntopf, the owner of a piano factory. We were very poor and couldn't afford to buy one, but he let me play any piano I wanted at any time."

Paderewski sat at the piano and started playing softly to everyone's pleasure.

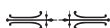
Kipling, oblivious to the music, was scrutinizing the scene. Houdini was staring at the animals hanging on the wall.

"Mr. Houdini, are you thinking of doing a magic trick?"

Q asked, watching Houdini.

"I'm getting inspired," Houdini replied with a wink.

"Goody, goody. I can't wait," David said.



"Wow! David, look at this attic. There are chests, furniture, and animals. Have you ever seen anything like this?" Michelle said in disbelief, walking around the attic, not knowing where to go first.

"Almost one hundred years of history is haunting this room," the president said with a twinkle in his eyes.

"Haunting?" David asked, grinning.

"Yes, there are lots of ghosts in the White House," Quentin said.

"Ghosts," Edith Wharton said playfully.

"David, did you hear?" Michelle asked him.

"What?"

"There are ghosts in the White House," Michelle said.

"That makes sense. The White House is old, and it would be the ideal place for ghosts," David said.

"The servants talk about the ghosts they see all the time," Q said.

"Keep your eyes open in the attic for William Harrison. He haunts the attic," Alice said mischievously. "He was the first president to die in the White House."

"Why does he haunt the attic?"

"He is looking for something," Quentin said. "I don't know what."

"He was president for only thirty-two days," the president said.

"He didn't want to die and is still hanging on," Archie said. "That's what the rumor is."

"Oh dear!" Edith Wharton said, looking around, her eyes as big as basketballs. "I'd love to write a story about ghosts in the White House."

"Abraham Lincoln walks in the Yellow Oval Room," Archie said. "Whenever he is worried about our country, he walks up and down the hallway and knocks on doors and windows."

"Wow!" Michelle said, fascinated. "I want to see his ghost—that would be so much fun to see his ghost."

"Have you seen him?" David asked Archie.

"No," Archie said. "But I do hear someone banging the front door sometimes."

"Really?" Edith Wharton said.

"I hear that too," Q said.

"Lincoln?" Edith Wharton asked.

"Yes," Q replied.

"Don't forget Mrs. Lincoln's sighting of President Tyler asking Julia Gardiner's hand in marriage," Alice said.

"And the Grants' staff said they saw Willie Lincoln, who died in the White House,"

"Really!"

"And there is someone else banging on the doors."

"Hmm," Michelle said.

"Quentin is telling the truth. I have been with him when weird ghostly things happened," Archie said.

"Do you know who is the other person banging on the doors?" Michelle asked.

"Yes," Archie said. "A young woman who wants to see Andrew Johnson."

“Why?” Edith Wharton asked.

“She wants Andrew Johnson to pardon her mother, accused of conspiring to kill Abraham Lincoln,” Archie said.

“Quentin, that’s your president,” David said.

“I know,” Quentin replied, disinterested.

“Maybe there are papers about this woman and Andrew Johnson,” David said.

“I didn’t think of that,” Q said. “Great idea.”

“Tell everyone about the other ghosts,” Ethel said.

“There is a nice ghost in the Yellow Oval Room who plays the violin” Quentin said.

“Who is the ghost?” Michelle asked.

“Take a guess,” Q asked her.

“I have no idea,” Michelle replied. “Tell me.”

“Jefferson,” Q answered.

“Of course,” Michelle said, laughing.

“And don’t forget the smell of wet laundry and scent of lavender in the East Room when there is no laundry done in there,” Ethel said.

“Oh yeah,” Quentin said. “I forgot.”

“What’s that about?” Edith Wharton asked curious.

“Abigail Adams used to hang her clothes in the East Room,” Ethel answered.

“Interesting,” Edith Wharton said.

“There is Andrew Jackson’s laugh that’s being heard in the Rose Room once in a while—even Mary Todd Lincoln has heard it, and she also heard him swear,” Ethel said.

“Have you?” Michelle asked.

“Of course,” Quentin answered.

“Quentiiiiin,” Alice said. “Come on...”

“Many, many ghosts of history in the White House,” the president laughed.

"Now, dear, nothing to worry about," James told Edith Wharton. "It's an interesting way of capturing the children's imagination."

"Boooo," Houdini said, mockingly sneaking behind Edith Wharton.

"Ha ha ha," the children laughed.

"Well, Henry," Edith Wharton said, laughing. "Believe it or not, I'd love to see some ghosts in the White House."

"Proud of you," Henry James said. "That would be fun."

All the curious children approached the strange group of adults talking ghosts.

"I see the ghost," London said mischievously.

"Where, where?" clamored the excited children, hoping to see one.

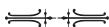
"There," London said, pointing at a schooner.

"Where? I don't see a ghost," Quentin said.

"Me neither," David said, looking as hard as he could.

"I'm serious. See?" Jack London said, picking up the schooner and pointing at the writing on the left side of the sailboat.

"Ha ha ha," the children laughed.



"I like the ghost," Q said.

"Me too," Frost said. "Even though not a ghost house, it is a mysterious abode floating under snow-white marble eyes."

"What?" Q asked.

"The ship is a floating home," Alice said all knowingly.

"Oh!" Q said.

"One day I'm going to sail around the world on a schooner similar to this," London said.

"Please take me with you," David said. "I want to see the world."

"On this side, it says *Lynx*," Michelle said, pointing to the right side.

"The *Lynx* was used by privateers during the War of 1812 to defend American freedom," the president said. "Unfortunately it was captured early in the war."

Quentin quickly grabbed the toy schooner and turned it every which way.

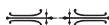
"Careful, Quentin, this looks old," Ethel said, concerned about possible damages being done to the schooner.

"I'm careful," Q told her.

"I know you are trying to be," Ethel said. "Still. Handle it with care."

"Q, what are you doing?" Archie asked.

"I'm just looking for a date or a president's name," Q answered.



At that moment, a black shadow was seen flying around.

"Did you see that black shadow?" Michelle asked.

"It's a ghost," Houdini said jokingly.

"Perhaps a bat," David said.

"Bats...Are there black bats tumbling about?" Frost said.

Edith Wharton, frowning, paused and held her hands together over her mouth, looking up at the ceiling.

"Oh no! Now bats!"

"No, Mrs. Wharton," Quentin said, reassuring the author. "There are no bats in the attic, just ghosts."

"Here, here, Loretta," Archie called on the culprit throwing her shadow on the wall.

Loretta responded by squawking and gently coming to rest on his shoulder.

“Ha ha ha,” Houdini said, laughing. “Loretta tricked everyone.”

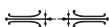
Hearing the word “ghost,” Paderewski, grinning, threw himself into playing a dark, somber piano piece: Bach’s *toc-cata* and *fugue*.

“Bach’s *toc-cata*—I love the piece. Alas, I can’t sing to it. A good thing, since I need to tend to my voice, nurse it, feed it a proper diet,” Caruso lamented, touching his throat.

“Did Frost drop the comb?” David told Michelle, laughing.

Across the room, Kipling was walking toward a wall filled with toy animals and knickknacks.

“Look at this jungle,” Kipling said, admiring the wall.



Quentin went to Michelle and David, who were glancing at a chest.

“This music is too serious. I don’t like this music,” Quentin told them.

“Quentin, it’s perfect eerie, spooky ghost music,” David said. “I like it.”

“Let’s cheer up and go see what Kipling is up to,” Michelle suggested.

Michelle and David were huge fans of Kipling, so they were curious to see where he would go. Because wherever he’d go was bound to be fascinating.

“I agree. Time to cheer things up,” Kipling said, ignoring Paderewski’s music; he started singing as best as he

could: "Now we are come to the kingdom...Our legions wait at the gate...And the crown is ours to take...and the Realm is ours by right."

"We come to the kingdom..." Michelle said, repeating Kipling's words.

"The attic," David said, clarifying kingdom.

"We come for a story," Michelle said, singing.

Michelle smiled.

"Kipling can sing too," Michelle said in awe. "I thought he was tone-deaf."

"His voice is not equal to that of a popular singer," Caruso said in as nice a way as he could.

Undeterred and absorbed, Paderewski continued to play the somber music.

Kipling kept singing, more like speaking with rhythm. "When your heart is young and gay...work your works and play your play."

"OK. Play your play," Quentin said, repeating Kipling's words.

"Hand him the keys of the place...'tis the dreamer whose dreams come true," Kipling continued.

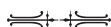
"Never," Quentin said.

"Quentin, don't you want the attic to be a place where dreams come true?" Alice asked.

"Oh, I misunderstood. I thought I was supposed to give up the keys to the attic," Quentin replied.

"We would never expect you to do that." The president laughed.

CHAPTER 11



STICKLY-PRICKLY? SLOW-AND-SOLID?

Intrigued by the famous storyteller, they watched him very closely. They were right on his tail except for Quentin, who suddenly stopped again at a chest.

How could they not? He might stop and tell a new story and take them to “an enchanted land of marvels.”

Kipling continued to the left and stopped at the long wall with shelves occupied by toy animals, animal masks, and various other interesting gadgets: whale, camel, rhino, crab, butterfly, and hedgehogs.

“Fascinating. This shelf has objects that remind me of many of the stories I wrote. Actually, all my stories are on this shelf,” Kipling said, examining an armadillo, a turtle candle holder, a hedgehog brush, and a painted American jaguar. “A jungle...My stories are definitely here.”

The children, except Quentin, approached Kipling who was now holding the armadillo, waiting to see what Kipling was going to say.

“Stickly-Prickly,” Michelle cried out excitedly, always running with a wild imagination.

“Yes, Stickly-Prickly,” Kipling laughed.

“Stickly-Prickly?” Quentin asked, leaving the chest filled with clothes, putting on Andrew Johnson’s striking vest but leaving the double-breasted Prince Albert frock with silk lapel behind.

“Stickly-Prickly is a smart hedgehog whose prickles become armor to avoid being eaten by Painted Jaguar.”

“Stickly-Prickly?” Q asked.

“Yes, that’s his name,” Michelle said.

“Isn’t that a clever name for a hedgehog?” Q said.

“It’s a clever story. The jaguar is hungry but can’t catch anything. His mother tells him it is easy to catch a hedgehog when it is dropped in water because it panics and can’t swim. And the secret to get a tortoise is to scoop him out of his shell.”

“I see,” Quentin said.

“But neither want to get eaten by the jaguar so the hedgehog confuses the jaguar by learning to swim.”

“Painted Jaguar thinks the hedgehog is a tortoise.”

“Oh!” Q said, bemused. “How could he confuse a hedgehog for a tortoise?”

“Easy—the hedgehog swam and grew a shell to look like a tortoise,” Michelle said.

“What are you looking at?” Q asked David.

“Slow-and-Solid,” David said, picking up the turtle.

“Slow-and-Solid?” Quentin asked, intrigued by this new name.

"Slow-and Solid, the tortoise, with his friend the hedgehog, Stickly-Prickly, fool the hungry Painted Jaguar by switching their appearances," Michelle said.

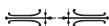
"The Painted Jaguar is so confused about what they are, he gives up on eating them," David said.

"Very good. That's the main idea of the story," Kipling said, applauding Michelle and David.

"The story is called 'The Beginning of the Armadillos,'" Michelle said.

"By golly, that's how the armadillo got its shell. I like that story. I want to hear more stories. What other stories do you know by Kipling?" Quentin asked Michelle and David, suddenly interested in the storyteller.

"All," both answered in unison.



Quentin went to the shelf and picked up a whale paperweight with a fish in its mouth. "OK. Is there a story about a whale?"

"I'm hungry," David said, laughing.

"Are you?" Quentin asked, baffled.

"I could eat a man," David answered.

Michelle and David laughed.

Quentin looked at them, confused, lost.

"Come, behave yourself," Kipling, laughing, told Michelle and David.

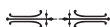
"Nay," Michelle said, dancing, picking up a camel whose hump was a bell.

"A camel..." Quentin said. "Did you know George Washington loved to see exotic animals, and one day he paid to have a camel brought to Mount Vernon?"

“How fun!”

“Wouldn’t that be fun to have a camel come to our house?” David told Michelle.

“It would be.”



“Is there a story about a camel?” Archie asked. now getting involved.

“Hmm,” David said.

“Humph!” Michelle said.

“Yes,” Kipling answered.

“The Camel was lazy,” David said. “Whenever someone asked him to help, he said one word.”

“Humph!” Michelle repeated with a twinkle in her eyes.

“When the Dog, the Ox, and the Horse asked for his help,” David added, “he would always answer...”

“Humph!” Quentin, catching up, said, interrupting.

“You got it.”

“One day they went to their manager, the Djinn, and asked for his help in forcing the Camel to do some work,” Michelle said. “So, in turn, the Djinn paid a visit to the Camel and demanded he worked.”

“Let me guess...He said ‘humph,’” Quentin and Archie said, amused.

“Exactly,” David said. “So the Djinn got very upset.”

“And used magic,” Houdini continued. He was a magician who knew all about the Djinn.

“How?” Q asked.

“Saying magic words that puffed up the Camel’s back,” Kipling answered. “And to this day, the Camel still has a lump on his back.”

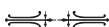
“Bravo,” Quentin said, clapping. “I like that story too.”

“I don’t pity any man who does hard work worth doing. I admire him. I pity the creature who does not work,” said the president.

“So you don’t think much of the camel,” Quentin told the president.

“The camel in the story didn’t want to work and affected everyone around him,” the president said. “He wasn’t a good member of society.”

Michelle silently put the camel back on the shelf next to the armadillo.



“Father, I like Stickly-Prickly. Do we own Sticky-Prickly?” Quentin asked the president, grabbing the armadillo and examining it carefully turning it upside down.

“What are you doing?” Alice asked Quentin.

“I want to see who it belonged to,” Quentin answered.

“No, Quentee, we do not own the armadillo. It belongs to the White House, as most things in here were left by the previous White House occupants.”

“Oh OK,” Quentin said. “Father, Father, I found something else that belonged to Andrew Johnson. I get another point,” he added, jumping up and down. “See, see the engraving on the armadillo says ‘to President AJ 1830.’”

“Eighteen thirty...I wish ‘AJ’ stood for Andrew Johnson, but, you see, Andrew Jackson was president in 1830, not Andrew Johnson,” the president said.

“Oh golly,” Quentin said, disappointed.

“I guess the armadillo is my point,” Ethel said. “I’m Andrew Jackson.”

“Yep, one for you, Ethel,” the president said.

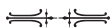
“That’s not fair—why does she get a point?” Quentin said. “I found it.”

“Thank you, Quentin,” Ethel said, happy.

“Quentin, it will all work out,” the president said reassuringly.

But Quentin, frustrated, left the group and walked toward the chest one more time.

The group, mesmerized by Kipling, stayed around him, hoping he would tell one more story.



Kermit went to the shelf and examined the turtle, but all he could see were scribbles.

“Kermit, what are you looking at?”

“Scribbles on the turtle. I thought I’d find Grover Cleveland in this metaphoric jungle, even though he was a fisherman and a hunter,” Kermit said.

“He could have hunted any of these animals,” Archie said.

Kermit didn’t respond; he was busy checking the turtle.

“Did you find anything on the turtle?” Archie asked.

“I’m not sure,” Kermit said, squinting his eyes, trying to make sense of what he was looking at. “Just scrawls—I think it says ‘1885.’”

“Let me see.”

Archie took the turtle and looked as close as possible to the difficult-to-read, partly erased marks.

“‘1885 to pres’ is all I see,” Archie said.

“That counts,” Kermit said. “Let’s go find out who was president that year.”

"The president's encyclopedia will tell us," Archie said.

"Brilliant," the president said. "Love the team spirit."

Quentin was always all ears and all eyes. He came rushing back when he heard Kermit and Archie talk about a date on the turtle.

"Father, who was president in 1885?" Quentin asked, coming back, hearing the turtle had a possible signature. "Was it Andrew Johnson?"

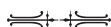
"Q, come with us. We are going to look in the encyclopedia of presidents," Kermit told him. "I'll tell you."

"Father, please tell me," Quentin begged his father.

"All I can say, Quentee...it wasn't Andrew Johnson," the president answered.

"Thanks, Kermit," Q said. "I don't need to go look. I know it's not my president. I'm too busy."

CHAPTER 12



JAIL IN THE WHITE HOUSE?

“Ms. Wharton, you have a butterfly on your shoulder.”
“Nice, I love butterflies. How did it get there?”
Edith Wharton asked, looking at the blue butterfly.

“It must have fallen when I tried to reach the ring on the moose’s antlers,” Quentin answered, grabbing the butterfly and setting it on a shelf.

“Look, they’re all over the wall,” Michelle said.

“Butterflies! But where are the cabbage leaf?” Kipling asked, looking at the wall.

“In the garden,” Michelle answered.

“Why are there butterflies everywhere?” David asked.

“My father,” Alice answered. “Ever since he was a little boy, my father has been fascinated with insects and animals. He can’t resist adding more specimens to his collection.”

“He loves butterflies,” Ethel answered.

“And birds,” Q added.

"He loves everything in nature, plants, insects, and animals," Alice said.

"Just like you, David," Michelle said.

"What beautiful butterflies!" Frost exclaimed, looking at the blue and gold specimens inside a frame.

"I collect them," the president said.

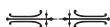
"So do I," Churchill said. "Beautiful specimen. My favorite butterfly is the Black-veined White. Do you have any?"

"No, but I have quite a few white, zebra, and eastern tiger swallowtails," the president answered.

"I love those. Great family," Churchill answered.

"My favorite is the peacock butterfly," Kipling said, joining the conversation.

"I love their striking blue color," Churchill said.



"Let me guess," Ethel said, turning to Mr. Kipling laughing. "You wrote a story about butterflies."

"I did," Kipling said.

"I know the story. The butterfly that stamped and caused earthquakes," Michelle said.

"How can a butterfly cause an earthquake?" Quentin asked, disbelieving.

"Everything is possible in the make-believe world," Kipling said.

"Houdini, can you cause an earthquake?" Q asked.

"No, but guess what? I can make a butterfly appear," Houdini said, winking.

"You can," Q said, surprised. "Can you do it now?"

"Why?" Houdini replied, "You have hundreds on the wall."

"Oh, you are right," Q said, dying to see Houdini perform a trick, added, "But how about one more?"

"Sh," Ethel said.

"This, my most beloved, is a story quite different from the other three hundred and fifty stories written about King Solomon," Kipling said dreamily.

"Wow!" Q said. "Three hundred and fifty stories!"

"Yes, as far as I know," Kipling said.

"Father, are there that many stories about you?"

"No," the president said.

"Isn't that a lot of stories about one person?"

"Yes. They are all serious, even this one," David said.

"How so?"

"The story is about King Solomon, who wanted all his wives to coexist peacefully."

"Wives," Q said. "This is serious."

"With Djinn, of course," Michelle added.

"Magic again," Houdini said, smiling. "Magic is everywhere."

"Oh, if there is magic in the story, how can the story be so serious?" Q said.

"Magic makes a big difference," Houdini said.

"Of course," Kipling said. "Mixing reality with magical moments are key to storytelling."

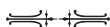
"Even though I like the butterfly story, I think this story is more for grown-ups. I prefer the story about how the leopard got its spots," Michelle said, pointing to a leopard's mask.

"Me too," David said. "Going to the leopard?"

"If I win the game, I'd love to hear you, Mr. Kipling, tell that story," Michelle said.

The president was listening.

“I’d love to hear Mr. Kipling tell us a story too,” Ethel said.



“If...” Kipling said mischievously.

Quentin gave Kipling a puzzling look but decided not to ask anything about the “if.”

“If I win, I want to go find more secret passages,” David said.

“Don’t you want to do something different? You have done that already,” Michelle said.

“I know, but it was so exciting. The White House is huge—there has to be hundreds of hidden passages with secrets. I know you would love it, Michelle.”

“Oh, David!” Michelle said, feeling let down. “I know I would, but Kipling is the best storyteller in the world. Don’t you want to hear him tell a story? This is really our only chance.”

David shrugged his shoulders dreaming of exploring the White House.

“If you can dream...” Kipling repeated with a twinkle in his blue eyes.

“On second thought, if I win, I’d want us to do a play in Tad’s Lincoln theater?” Ethel said. “Wouldn’t that be fun? We have all the president’s clothes and so many props.”

“Tad Lincoln had a theater in the White House?” Michelle asked.

“Yes,” Archie replied. “We use it all the time to put plays on.”

“He charged money when people came to see his plays,” Ethel said. “Which, of course, we don’t do.”

“I have an idea,” Michelle said. “Maybe we can act a Kipling story?”

"Which one?" Ethel asked.

"My favorite, 'How the Leopard Got Its Spots,'" Michelle answered.

"Brilliant, Michelle," the president said. "You might both get your wish."

"I love plays," Michelle said.

"So do I," Henry James said. "My president, President Tyler, loved Shakespeare and often quoted Othello in his speech: 'Oh, my reputation, reputation, reputation!...foolishly throw away a pearl.'"

"If President Tyler would have been able, he would have invited Shakespeare to the White House," the president said. "Instead, he invited the great Charles Dickens, who also wrote a few plays."

"My school did Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* as a play," David said. "It was lots of fun."

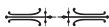
"A great story about how Christmas should be celebrated," Robert Frost said.

"Incredible that the White House has a theater," Michelle said in awe. "David, a theater here in the White House—how great is that!"

"The White House is the most amazing place in the world," David replied.

"David, does that mean you would change your mind and do a play?" Michelle asked him.

"Maybe."



"Ghosts, secret passages, theater, attic filled with our country's treasures," Michelle said. "The White House has everything."

"You are right about that," Kermit said.

"It even has a jail," Quentin said, laughing.

"Jail?" Michelle said, surprised and unbelieving. "No! A real jail?"

"Yep," Quentin said.

"Can we see it?" David asked.

"Wait a minute, why is there a jail in the White House?" Michelle asked.

"To punish bad people," Quentin answered.

"Who? Surely there are no bad people in the White House."

Not everyone agreed with Quentin's opinion of a real jail.

"Quentin...a real jail?" Alice said with derision.

"To me it is, Alice," Quentin replied in a very serious manner.

"It's a 'play' jail," Ethel said, laughing, looking at Michelle's surprised face.

"Oh!" Michelle said, relieved.

"We reenact battles, capture enemies and spies, and put them in jail until their trials," Archie said playfully.

"That's more like it," Michelle said, looking for things on a dresser close by.

"Our favorite is the battle of 1812 between the British and the Americans," Quentin said.

"A very important battle," the president said grinning.

"Jack was put in jail for being a spy, but the president pardoned him," Archie said.

"Jack could never do anything wrong," Michelle said, petting Jack.

"No, silly, not our dog," Quentin answered, playing with a small hoop. "Jack was Tad Lincoln's doll soldier."

"By the way, I found a piece of paper signed President

Lincoln pardoning him,” Archie said, brandishing a piece of paper.

“Excellent, Archie,” the president said.

“I’m getting lots of points,” Archie said, smiling as if there were no tomorrow.

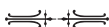
The adults were looking around for their president’s objects.

Paderewski was playing very softly.

Michelle and David were walking around when Michelle spotted a beautiful brown-and-gold dresser.

“We are getting a free concert,” Michelle whispered to David.

“And the cameraman is filming us,” David said, leaving Michelle and walking around looking for a chest.



“Guys, look what I found,” Michelle screamed out, putting a stunning diamond butterfly hairpin in her hair. “Butterflies for dressing up.”

“The children follow the butterflies...” Kipling said, overlooking the scene.

“Divine design,” Edith Wharton said, approaching. “Love the purity of the diamonds and stones.”

“Look the butterfly is fluttering,” Ethel said, bedazzled.

“Once upon a time, I dreamt I was a butterfly fluttering,” Jack London said in a dreamy manner.

“How extraordinary. It’s set *en tremblant*,” Edith Wharton said, examining the butterfly piece.

“*En tremblant*—what does that mean?” Ethel asked.

“Parts of the diamond piece are set on a spring that makes the part move,” Edith Wharton said.

“Wow,” Quentin said. “The butterfly does flutter, but what makes it flap like that?”

“Tiny little springs.”

“Quentin, you need to pay attention,” Ethel said, admonishing her little brother.

“Sorry,” Quentin said, mesmerized with the butterfly flapping its wings. “Maybe we can make a bird that does that and give it to Mother for her birthday.”

“Great idea,” the president said, laughing.

“Once upon a time, I dreamt I was a butterfly fluttering,” London repeated softly, quizzically.

“Beautiful wings,” Henry James said.

“What else did you find?” Alice asked, ignoring London’s quote.

“These cream leather and net gloves with appliquéd butterflies,” Michelle said, slipping the elegant gloves on her hands.

“So graceful; so exquisite; so sophisticated,” Edith Wharton replied, impressed.

“Which president’s wife were those do you think?” Alice asked, scrutinizing the accessories.

“I don’t know. There is no name,” Michelle replied. “Maybe my president’s wife, but I can’t tell.”

“Where did you find them?” Alice asked, looking around.

“Here, in this dressing table’s drawer?” Michelle said, pointing to the drawer.

Then, picking up a blue butterfly adorning a watch, she immediately put the watch on her wrist. “I absolutely love butterflies.”

“That dresser was bought in France by President Monroe,” the president said.

"Well. There you have it," Michelle said, looking at Alice.

"So?" Alice said. "It doesn't mean the gloves belonged to Elizabeth Monroe. Dolly Madison loved clothes and fashion just as much."

"True, but remember James Monroe bought a lot of furniture and his wife bought lots of clothes when in Paris," the president said. "And these were found on their dresser."

"Elizabeth Monroe was known as *la Belle Américaine*," Edith Wharton said.

"I know, but I still think these belonged to Dolly Madison. Dolly Madison was the first First Lady after all," Alice said, admiring a butterfly brooch. "She loved to make a statement with the clothes and accessories she wore. Remember, she was known for wearing turbans and adding her own touch, such as putting bird-of-paradise feathers on her turban. So, why not butterflies?"

"Oh! My butterfly, my soul. Butterflies are all about the souls," Robert Frost recited.

"*O sole mio*," Caruso chimed in.

"Butterflies are flowers that fly and all but sing," Frost continued.

"Beautiful, Frost. A poet can do much more for his country than the proprietor of a nail factory," the president said.

"Hmm," Jack London said, having a different take but going no further as to not embarrass the president.

Quentin approached the group and wanted everyone to know he also liked butterflies. "Look, I found quite a few objects with butterflies."

"You too," Alice said, eyeing Quentin with suspicion. She had a hunch he was up to something.

“Hey, gang, what do you think of those drawers with butterflies?” Quentin said, laughing, slipping the fancy ribbon-and-lace butterfly underwear, then putting a laced handkerchief around his neck and fanning himself with a gold paper leaf folding fan with a butterfly design.

“Quentin, where did you get all those?” Ethel asked. “The fan is beautiful.”

“Take the drawers off immediately, Quentin,” Alice commanded with an air of disdain.

“Don’t be so put off—just wanted to get a laugh,” Quentin said, removing the butterfly underwear.

“Well, you did. These are for girls only,” Alice said, grabbing the drawers from Quentin. “Men don’t do that.”

“Father worshipped *Little Women*, and it’s all about girls,” Quentin said. “And other girls’ stories, and he is very manly.”

“That’s different,” Alice said. “Reading stories is not wearing girls’ clothes.”

“There, I took the butterflies off,” Q said. “I won’t do that again.”

The president was talking softly to Bitzer, who was listening, putting his camera down. No one could hear what was being discussed.

“Oh look! More butterflies by the moose’s head,” Michelle said out loud, approaching the wall of butterflies.

“Butterflies everywhere but outside,” Wharton said almost reprehensibly but at the same time smiling at the president.

“Butterflies are flowers that fly,” Frost repeated.

“Exactly. That’s why butterflies should fly in a magical place,” Edith Wharton said.

"In an enchanting garden," her old friend Henry James joined in.

"Mr. President, you must come to the Mount. Butterflies rule my garden," Edith Wharton added. "They are all over my phlox, blue delphinium, dianthus, and petunias."

"These are paradise for the butterflies," the president said.

"Sounds magical," Alice said.

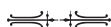
"We would love to come," the president said.

"I don't have a garden per se, but I do look at butterflies as gardens with wings," Henry James said.

"Love it. Such a lovely image, Henry," Edith Wharton told her old friend, smiling.

"It is blue-butterfly day, and there is more unmixed color on the wing," Frost said playfully.

CHAPTER 13



WHO GETS A POINT?

W*hizz!* Something flew right by London's ears. "What was that?" London asked, spinning around, brushing his ear with his hand.

"That," David said, pointing to the ring resting on the moose antler.

"As good a place as any for a ring toss," London said, laughing heartily, patting Quentin on the back.

"Shall we have a ring toss game?" troublemaker London added.

"Why not?" Quentin said.

Quentin was delighted to have found a partner in crime. He went to the moose and tried to pick up the ring but couldn't.

"How about a horseshoe game instead?" London suggested. "Wouldn't that be easier? It's on the floor."

"It would be, but it's fun to target the moose's antlers," Q said, then asked, "Do you like to play horseshoe?"

"I sure do."

"Do you know the boxer Jeffries?"

"I certainly do."

"He hammered a penholder in the shape of a horse-shoe for Father?"

"That's neat. He is the greatest world heavyweight champion," London said, picking up the ring from the antlers and setting it down. "Why don't we play a game of horse-shoes? You go first."

"OK, I'm up for another game," a delighted Quentin said, checking on Jonathan still in his pocket. "But the horseshoe is a little heavy for me."

"Let me hold Jonathan," Jack London said.

Quentin gave Jonathan to London and threw the horse-shoe at a stick on the floor. But the horseshoe missed the stick and hit an iron bucket, making a loud metallic sound, interrupting the ethereal butterfly moment everyone was experimenting.

Surprisingly, no one said anything and ignored the incident, continuing to look at the butterflies.

"I like to throw the ring on the antler better," Q said, embarrassed, quickly picking up the ring, ready to play a ring toss game.

The president, however, had a different outlook.

"Quentee," the president said, upset. "*You*...do the right thing, and now the right thing is to play the president's game."

"Sorry, Father," Quentin said, chewing on his lower lip, "but, Father, why is it wrong to throw rings at the moose? I read that President Johnson loved to do ring toss when he was growing up? I'm only doing what President Johnson did as a kid."

“Quentee, there is a place and time for a ring toss game, and now is not the time.”

“Oh OK, Father,” Quentin said, looking at the floor, feeling bad.

“We will play after the president’s game,” Jack London said. “Here is Jonathan back to console you.”

Quentin picked up Jonathan and put him under his hat.

“Sure will—that would be delightful,” Quentin said, tipping the stovepipe the way Lincoln did. Jonathan jumped out.

But the president quickly caught it.

“That reminds me when I was a boy, I captured a toad for science purpose and put it under my hat, but when I tipped to my neighbor, the toad escaped. History repeats itself,” the president laughed. “I got Jonathan just in the nick of time.”

“What will you do with him?” Quentin asked, looking at Jonathan.

“I need to think about it,” the president said. “Any suggestions?”

But Quentin was already looking for another adventure, walking around the adults and the chests.

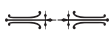
“Hey, Quentin, I’m going to search that old-looking chest over by there. Why don’t you come with me?” David pointed at the chest in the farthest corner of the room.

Everyone was investigating various areas of the attic, staying close to the entrance.

For a while, no one spoke so enthralled they were.

Who knew an attic would be so interesting!

“Glad to see everybody busy looking,” the president said. “Just a heads-up. I am keeping track of everyone’s progress. Have fun.”



Archie was first to speak.

"I found Lincoln's black stovepipe trimmed in beaver skin," Archie said, putting the hat on. "And that's not all. Look."

Quentin, David, Michelle, and Ethel gathered around Archie.

"I have his eyeglasses, his pen, and his gloves, a schoolbook, a chamber pot, and his briefcase, notebooks, saddlebags, Emancipation Proclamation—and there is so much more."

"Wow," David said.

"Excellent, Archie," the president said.

Putting Lincoln's eyeglasses on and his gloves, Archie proudly said, "I'm now President Abraham Lincoln." To prove it, he took the Gettysburg Address out of the briefcase and read the first words: "Years ago our father brought forth, on this continent, a new nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

"Excellent, President Lincoln," the president said.

"I think you have the wrong hat," Quentin said, interrupting. "That's Andrew Johnson's hat."

"No, I do have the right hat," Archie said, taking the hat off examining it.

"Andrew Johnson was Lincoln's vice president and became president when Lincoln was assassinated. Men at the time wore stovepipe. So Quentin might be right—it could be Johnson's hat."

"No. See, there is a worn-out mark where he used to put his fingers to tip it when he met someone on the street," Archie insisted, stroking the hat.

Feeling something in the hat, Archie stopped and moved the lining, removing a piece of paper, and read it.

"I got proof. A speech he wrote for the dedication of a post office."

"Bravo, Archie—good proof it was Lincoln's hat, and the dedication is a good document," the president said.

"OK, you win," Quentin conceded. "It's President Lincoln's hat."

"But guess what I found along with Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation?" Archie said.

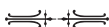
"What?" Quentin asked.

"A document signed by Andrew Johnson called the Amnesty Proclamation," Archie said, handing over the 1865 document to Quentin.

"Really! Jeez, thanks, Archie," Quentin said, finally cheering up, proudly holding the document.

"All for each and each for all, but only on one condition that each works with might and main to so maintain himself as not to be a burden to others," the president said.

"Yes, Father," Archie said.



Alice came into the scene.

"Anyone for hot chocolate?" Alice said, exuberant, pointing at a silver pot on top of a magnificent secretary desk.

"I am," Quentin said jovially, getting into the spirit of the game.

"This French chocolate pot has the initials 'JM' engraved on it," Alice said, showing everyone the silver pot.

"James Madison," Archie said.

"Sorry, Alice," the president said. "The silver pot and the desk on which it stands were bought in France by James Monroe."

"Not President Monroe again," Alice said, frustrated.

"I'm afraid so."

"Father, I was having fun until now. Why did two presidents with the same initials succeed each other? It makes the game confusing."

"Take heart, Alice. If you inspect the desk carefully, it has secret compartments. Who knows what you might find. Monroe and Madison wrote to one another almost daily. There could be important letters."

"Hmm, great tip. I'll look in a minute. I'm curious who has President James Monroe," Alice asked, annoyed, looking around.

"Don't you know?" Ethel asked her.

"No. Did I miss something?" Alice said.

"Me. So sorry, Alice. My president is James Monroe," Edith Wharton said.

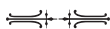
"Oh! You are *la Belle Américaine*," Alice said.

"Yes," Edith Wharton answered. "And you are *la Belle* of Washington."

"I should have guessed earlier," Alice said.

"There was a lot going on," Edith Wharton said.

Alice smiled a most gorgeous smile.



"Superb French desk. The Monroes had exquisite taste," Edith Wharton said, standing by the French desk, opening its drawers.

"This is a *Decoration of Houses*—worthy piece," James said, admiring the Louis XVI-style desk.

"I agree," Edith Wharton said.

"Very famous desk," the president said.

"Why?" Ethel asked.

"He wrote the important Monroe Doctrine sitting at the desk."

"You want to see something interesting in the desk?" Quentin asked Wharton.

"Hmm," Edith Wharton said, hesitating, not sure what to make of Quentin's ideas. "A snake?" she said humorously.

"No. Don't you like secrets?" Quentin said, opening a fake door hiding drawers. "Look, there is a secret compartment."

"With a secret rat in it?"

"Of course not."

"Father, there are hundreds of letters," Alice said excitedly, rushing to take a close look.

"You are certainly right," Edith Wharton said, still suspicious, moving the letters slowly and carefully. Looking at the letters, she said, "Alice, these are important letters between Monroe, Jefferson, and Madison."

"Yes, they were," the president said.

"Goody, goody," Quentin exclaimed. "Maybe there is something for me."

"Too early for your president," the president said.

"Father, can David and I have them?" Alice begged.

"Why not?"

"I should get a finder's point," Quentin said.

"I'll keep it in mind," the president said, laughing.

"Too bad my president didn't write to them," Quentin said sulkily.

"Sorry, Quentee. Johnson came some fifty-four years after."

"Points for you, Mrs. Wharton," Quentin told the famous writer.

Edith Wharton smiled widely.

"Henry, come and search for more of Monroe's pieces with me," she told James, more interested in beautiful French furniture than in documents about his president.

"A pleasure, Edith, to do so," James said. "But keep your eyes open for things belonging to President Tyler, my president."

"Sure, I'd love to help, but what should I look for?"

"I'd love to see mementos of the Dickens's visit to the White House or Washington Irving's visit," James replied. "Both came to visit him, you know."

"Henry, furniture is much easier to spot than letters or books," Edith Wharton said.

"True, furniture is easier, but books like 'Rip Van Winkle' or 'Legend of Sleepy Hollow' should be easy to find—or better yet, a document signed by Tyler appointing the writer Washington Irving ambassador to Spain," Henry James said.

"If you insist, I'll keep my eyes open," Edith Wharton said heartedly. "Do you think really Dickens gave something to Tyler? He wasn't keen on America."

"Well, some of his books, like *Oliver Twist* and *The Old Curiosity Shop*, would have been great gifts for him and his fifteen kids," James answered.

"Let's look," Edith Wharton said enthusiastically. "I'd love to see documents from Dickens and Irving."

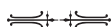
"I know you will find much more on Monroe besides French furniture. His daughter was friends with the daughter of Napoleon's first wife. Also, he did meet Napoleon to discuss the Louisiana Purchase. And don't forget Marquis de Lafayette—there has to be something on him."

“You are right—lots to be found,” Edith Wharton said happily. “Let’s get going.”

Off they went looking for documents, books, and more furniture.

Edith Wharton couldn’t help herself as they walked by an open chest overflowing with beautiful fabric; she stopped.

CHAPTER 14



QUENTIN LEARNS THE TRUTH

Alice and David were busy rummaging through the letters in Monroe's desk, but Quentin was just as busy having fun checking all the drawers.

"Quentin, you are being a nuisance opening and closing all the drawers, and frankly, you are in our way. Why don't you go see Michelle and Ethel?" Alice said.

"I don't want to," Quentin said. "They are looking for the book on presidents. This is more fun, and who knows? If I stay here, I might find something."

"You won't. Your president came years after Madison and Jefferson," Alice said, frustrated. "How about going to see Archie?"

"No, I want to stay here," Quentin answered, looking at some papers.

Archie heard the argument; dressed as Abe Lincoln, he had found a chest filled with papers. "Quentin, come over here. There is a lot of papers in this chest."

But when Quentin looked up, he saw Edith Wharton staring at a chest overflowing with fabric.

"What beautiful cloth!" Wharton said, admiring a beautiful French tablecloth. She bent down to touch the faded blue-and-gold silk tablecloth.

"Eek!" she screamed, fanning herself. "There is a rat in here snuggling on a silky snakeskin."

Henry James said, laughing, "Andrew Johnson's ghost rat on Alice's snake!"

"Henry, this not funny," Edith Wharton said, a little peeved.

"By buzzard, it could be the ghost back to life," Quentin, who had overheard, said, running back. "Let me get him. Won't I be your hero, Mrs. Wharton, if I catch the rat?"

Edith Wharton looked at Quentin with a sneaky suspicion.

Under the watchful eyes of Edith Wharton, Quentin managed to search under the fabrics. "Where are you, little beast?" And then, after a few minutes of poking around, he said, "Got Andrew Johnson's rat. Father, I finally get another point," he said, holding the rat for everyone to see.

The president raised his eyebrows, laughing.

"Quentee, how did Jonathan get in there?" Alice asked.

"Ask Father. Father, weren't you holding him last?" Quentin asked, looking at his father.

The president laughed. "Yes, he escaped. He was looking for something more exciting."

"My golly, just like me," Q said.

Edith Wharton gave Quentin a playful look.

"Oh, it is Jonathan, is it?" Edith Wharton said, "If it is him, then it's OK; however, the tablecloth might not be."

"Oh, why not? Jonathan is good and didn't do any damage, I'm sure," Quentin said, petting Jonathan.

Edith Wharton touched the fabric delicately inspecting it.

"Ms. Wharton, you know President Andrew Johnson kept a pet mouse in his bedroom," Quentin said innocently. "So if the president had a rat, it must be OK for me to have a rat. Don't you like rats?"

"No. I really don't, unless it's yours of course. By the way, why would a president keep mice as pets? I don't understand that at all," she said, staring in disbelief at Jonathan.

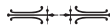
"Remember, you met Jonathan earlier," Quentin said, looking at her while petting Jonathan.

"How can I forget! Even though all rodents look the same to me," Edith Wharton said. "Where is Emily, by the way?" she added, nervously looking around. "She left her 'coat' in the chest."

"Emily is happily resting in Alice's bedroom," Quentin answered.

"Dear, look at the books on this beautiful Louis XVI French desk," James said, ushering her in the direction of the desk.

"Exquisite," Edith Wharton said, forgetting instantly the encounter with the small pest. She started opening each book looking for one of the famous writers who visited Tyler's White House.



"I found one more thing," Archie said, waving an 1865 playbill headlining "*Our American Cousin* from Ford's Theater."

"I knew it," Quentin said. "Everyone is easily finding hundreds of things. I can't even find two. I don't stand a chance."

"I don't either," Michelle said sadly. "I have President Millard Fillmore. I can't find much info on him. What did he do as a president? Was he a good president?"

"Are you asking me?" Quentin asked. "I'm only five years old. Ask me about Lincoln. I know more about Lincoln because of his son Tad Lincoln. He had a theater in the White House."

"Didn't you want Jefferson?" Alice asked.

"Yes," Quentin answered. "Because I hear Father talk about Jefferson a lot. But I like Lincoln too."

"Michelle, here is another book that might help you," the president said, giving her and Ethel the book. "It's a dictionary with lots of information on each president until now."

"Oh! Thank you, Mr. President. "We did take a peek earlier, but we need to have another look."

"Quentin, come and have a look," Ethel said warmly. "I'll read you about Andrew Johnson."

They all looked.

"Oh, oh!" Ethel said. "Andrew Johnson was..."

"What?" Quentin asked curious.

The president was keeping a close eye on them but didn't get involved.

"Hmm," Ethel said. "He...he..."

"He...what?" Quentin asked impatiently.

"He took over after Abraham Lincoln was killed," Ethel said.

"That's a good thing," Quentin said. "But I already knew that."

"But..." Ethel said hesitantly, afraid to tell him the bad news.

"But..." Quentin said. "Come on, Ethel, what is the big but?"

"You are not going to like it," Ethel said. "He was the first president to be impeached."

"Impeached—what does it mean?" Quentin asked.

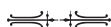
"People wanted him not to be president. He was accused of high crimes and treasons but was acquitted," the president said.

"I knew my president was bad news," Quentin said. "I never hear you, Father, talk about him."

"Actually, Quentin, Andrew Johnson was responsible for the Alaska Purchase—very important for our country," the president said.

"That's one good thing," Quentin said, sighing, losing interest again until he saw David touch his train.

CHAPTER 15



QUENTIN'S PROPOSAL

“Hey David, what do you think of my toy train?”
“I like it.”

“I got it for my birthday,” Q said.

“Nice birthday gift,” David said.

“Carlisle and Finch were the first one to make electric toy trains,” the president said.

“But it has nothing to do with your president. You know Jefferson never rode a train,” Quentin said.

“I know, but look what I found on the railroad track,” David said, showing him an old photo of men seated at a dining room table.

Quentin leaned forward to take a better look.

“Who are these men?” Quentin asked. “Do you know?”

“Look,” David said, turning the photo. “‘President Johnson and Ulysses Grant, Swing Around the Circle, 1865.’ What does ‘Swing Around the Circle’ mean?”

“Andrew Johnson went on a speaking campaign tour to promote his policies traveling by train,” the president said.

“That’s my president,” Quentin said with jubilation.

“Yep,” David said. “I thought you would be interested.”

“Jeez, David. Something else about my president,” Quentin said, smiling.

The president winked.

“Johnson is with my president,” Churchill said, snoop-ing around. “I know Grant was a great general who smoked cigars, but I had no idea he went on a campaign tour with Andrew Johnson.”

“He did, and he didn’t enjoy it. He went home early,” the president said. “Johnson’s speaking tour lost him the election.”

“Oh well!” Quentin said.

Roosevelt kept quiet about how the tour left people with a bad impression of Andrew Johnson and thought him a monster. He knew it would make Quentin unhappy.

“My president wasn’t liked, was he?” Quentin asked, very perceptive.

“Some liked him, but not everybody did,” the president answered. “At the beginning of his tour, he had a hundred thousand people cheering him, but people in cities that liked Lincoln rejected him.”

“I’m not sure I like him either,” Quentin said. “Though, Father, I do get a point for the picture.”

“Yes.”

“This is a busy train. It goes by all the villages,” Quentin told David.

“Pretty villages,” David said, looking at the three long connecting tables with many buildings.

"The train goes to all the villages you see along the track," Quentin said.

"It's a busy train. I see hundreds of buildings," David said.

"Yes, and there is going to be more. We are always adding buildings," Q said, very businesslike.

"Nice. It's going to be huuuge. Have you ever gone on a train?" David asked Quentin. "It's so much fun riding one."

"Not yet, but my father has. He has traveled thousands and thousands of miles on the train to deliver his speeches."

"Mr. President, did you travel on a train like this one?" David asked the president. "It's a very interesting train."

"It did look like this one, but the train I traveled on either ran on steam or coal. This toy train is electric, and by the way it was the first electric toy train ever made," the president answered.

"It says Carlisle and Finch on the side," David said. "Did they make the train?"

"Yes, they were the engineers who invented the electric toy train," the president said. "They gave this set to President McKinley."

"I thought Lionel made the first electric train," David said, baffled.

"No," the president said. "Carlisle and Finch were the first one."

"I love trains," Q answered.

"So do I," David said. "I thought this train might have a clue, and it did."

"But nothing about my president," Q said.

"In a way it did. You forget about the picture found by the train," David said.

“Oh, right.”

“Does the train work well?” David said, looking at the interesting old-looking caboose.

“It sure does,” Quentin said, going to a board with switches.

“Look who wants to go for a ride?” Q said, putting Jonathan on the train.

Q turned the switch on, but the minute the train started, Jonathan jumped off and disappeared into one of the house aligning the railroad track.

“Jonathan doesn’t want any more ride,” David said, laughing. “He is looking for the elevator.”

“David, do you want to see where the train goes?”

“Quentin, stay on task,” the president reminded him.

“I would love to see where it ends up, but we don’t have to check it out now. We need to look for more stuff,” David said.

“You are right.” Q turned off the switch, and the train stopped at a station by a church.

“This is so cool,” David said, looking at the station before moving on. “Does the train stop at a lot of stations?”

“A lot, but I have never counted them,” Quentin said. “The gang is building a country with many villages. There is a stop at many of the villages. The railroad track isn’t long enough, so some villages don’t have a stop.”

“You are building a country?” D said, puzzled.

“Yes, with a game called the Pretty Village. Everyone brings a village when they come.”

“Is that their ticket to the attic?” David asked.

“Funny—I never thought of that,” Q answered. “It should be.”

“How many villages are there?”

“I think we have a hundred villages.”

"Is that the game?" David said picking up the Pretty Village box and opening it.

"Yes," Quentin said.

"Oh! Look, playing cards," David said. "Which president played cards?"

"They all did," Quentin said.

"Really?"

"As far as I know," Quentin said.

David shuffled the cards and inspected them.

"There is a date on them," David said.

"Quick, maybe these belonged to Andrew Johnson," Quentin said, peeking over David's shoulder.

"Eighteen eighty-six," David read.

"Eighteen eighty-six—can't be Andrew Johnson," Quentin replied. "Johnson was 1865, after Lincoln."

"Do you know who was president in 1886?"

"Nope," Q said.

David was looking in a chest, shuffling things around.

"Hey, David, you want to form an alliance?"

"An alliance! Maybe—what do you have in mind?"

"We will go to war against everyone."

"How?"

"By you and I getting the most objects in the shortest amount of time. We could pretend to be the North against the South. You help me; I help you."

"Are we breaking the rules?"

"I haven't heard my father saying we couldn't," Q said. "I really want to win."

"Hmm. I'm not sure about that. Plus, I want to win too."

"I really want to win more," Q said.

"I know. What game would you choose if you win?" David asked, somewhat curious.

“Play hide-and-seek in the secret passages.”

“That’s what I want. It would be so much fun. This is what I’d like to do, even though I have already done that,” David said, pausing for a minute.

“You can do it again,” Quentin said. “You haven’t seen half of them.”

“That many more, huh?” David said, still thinking. “You see, we are so lucky Kipling is here. You know he is the best storyteller of all times.”

“So what?” Quentin said, fiddling with the cards.

“Well, I think it would be incredible to hear Kipling tell a story,” David said.

“Why?” Quentin said. “Isn’t your father good at telling stories?” He added, “Because no one can tell a better story than my father. He is the best.”

“I’m sure. My father is good too...but see, he is not Kipling,” David answered.

“Look what I found,” Quentin said, showing David a letter from Andrew Johnson to General Ulysses Grant, dated 1866.

“That’s great, Quentin,” David said.

“David, let’s help each other anyways. I know where Jefferson stuff is, and you don’t,” Quentin said. “How about the alliance?”

After a few moments, David said, “I don’t think we want the same winning prize, plus I’m sure I can find enough on Jefferson by myself. But I do want to help you, so if I see something with Andrew Johnson’s signature, I’ll tell you.”

Quentin, lowering his head, disappointed, said, “OK... in case you are interested, look at the green cabinet over there. You will find all kinds of things in it.”

"Yeah, I see it," David said, glancing at the huge cabinet with six big doors.

"Let's go check it out together."

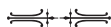
"OK. What's in there?" David asked, curious.

"Treasures," Q responded in a playful way.

Quentin hopping on leg followed David to the green cabinet.

"Hmm. What's so special about this cabinet? Is Q pulling my leg?" thought David.

CHAPTER 16



THE GOLDEN GOOSE CABINET

Bitzer was filming quietly. At the cabinet, David opened one door and found clothes separated in different sections belonging to the past presidents.

Quentin, after opening all the doors, saw a shiny marble under the tenth president's section. He picked it up; then he saw there were military uniforms with President Tyler's name on them. Quentin was about to put the marble back into one of the president's pocket when he felt more marbles.

"Hmm, interesting. Tyler is Frost's president," Q said, grinning.

Changing his mind, he decided to get more marbles.

David, after searching the same cabinet, found a section labeled Thomas Jefferson.

"What a finding! Thanks, Quentin," David yelled, showing him the green velveteen knee breeches with pearl

buttons, blue or red waistcoat, scarlet vest, linen shirt, and white cambric stock with the initials TJ and said, "I found a sleeping bag, too, and a pair of pointed shoes with large buckles."

"Well, what are you waiting for?" Q asked, adding, "put the clothes on."

"Do I have to?" David asked, not liking the idea. He really didn't feel like dressing up.

"Yep, you do," Q said. "You'll look just like Jefferson."

"I'm not sure I like the idea," David said, putting the green breeches and the white shirt on. "But I'm not wearing those big buckled shoes."

"Why not? Jefferson loved buckled shoes," Q said.

"Way too big on me. I already look like a fool."

"You look great." Quentin laughed and said, "More points for you. You owe me."

"All I need is a jacket. Where are his jackets?" David said, looking very hard for one. "In pictures, Jefferson always wears one. There are no jackets here that belong to Jefferson."

"Keep looking around," Q said.

"How about you Q?"

"I was the first one to dress up."

"All I see is the bow tie and the vest."

"That's enough," Q said putting the marbles in his pocket. "I'll be right back."

"Where are you going?"

"To see..." Q muttered.

"Where? I didn't hear?" David yelled.

Quentin didn't respond. But the girls heard David's scream and looked in his direction.

"Look at David," Alice said.

Alice, Michelle, and Ethel watched David tying the bottom of the breeches, which was down to his ankles.

"He is all dressed up like Jefferson," Michelle said, laughing watching David struggle with the breeches.

"He looks great," Ethel said.

"It looks as if he found a treasure trove of clothes," Michelle said, looking at the open green cabinet.

"Let's go find him and see what else is in there," Ethel said.

They hurried to find David still standing next to a green cabinet in a remote and dark corner of the attic.

"Did you find something else fascinating?" Michelle asked David.

"Yes, lots, lots of clothes that belonged to *all* the presidents that have lived in the White House."

"Really!"

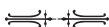
"I'm sure you will find something interesting," David said.

"Look at all these uniforms and gowns," Alice said in awe.

"We will definitely find something here," Ethel said, happy.

They were all over one another searching this incredible huge cabinet filled with clothes and examining every piece of clothing while chattering excitedly.

"OK. Time to go," David said, watching the three girls gibbering, touching every piece of clothing in sight. "This is too intense for me. Too many girls. Plus, I need to go find a jacket to have the whole Jefferson look."



"Wow! Look at all these clothes!" Michelle said, marveling, touching all the fine women's clothes. "The presidents and their wives' clothes."

"Alice, did you know these were here?" Edith asked.

"No, I never come to the attic," Alice said. "I'm too busy meeting people with Father."

"You mean you are too grown up to act childish," Edith said mischievously.

"Yes, as a matter of fact I am," Alice said haughtily.

"Well, that's OK. I'm glad you are here today," Edith said sincerely.

Alice smiled the way a grown-up does.

"Are we going to wear President's clothes or the First Lady's clothes?" Michelle asked, looking at beautiful dresses.

"Whichever one you want to wear," Alice said, examining a beautiful white muslin dress.

"But is wearing the presidents' clothes part of the game?" Michelle asked.

"Only if you want to," Alice responded, looking at three women's outfit. "Wouldn't it be more fun if it is?"

"Dressing up is always the right thing to do for a party," Ethel said. "And this is a Fourth of July party honoring the presidents, after all."

"You are right, but do you think wearing the president's wife's clothes count?" Michelle asked.

"I don't see why not," Alice answered, gazing at a red velvet gown. "Dolley Madison made this dress from the White House's Oval Drawing Room curtains."

"Gorgeous," Michelle said, admiring the gown.

"Are you going to wear that gown?" Ethel asked.

"I'd love to, but it's too precious," Alice said, touching the precious fabric.

"I'm surprised, Alice, that the value of this gown would stop you from wearing it," Ethel said.

"It's all about respect for history," Alice replied.

"I see," Ethel said, admiring her big sister.

"Yes, I love dressing up," Michelle said

"I guess it would be fun to dress up," Alice said, looking at three women's outfits. "I haven't done that in a long time."

"Just like when you were a little girl," Edith said, looking at Alice.

"Hmm, with these vintage dresses, it would be more like dressing for a fancy family event," Alice said, all serious.

"Oh OK, Alice," Edith said, going back to looking at Andrew Jackson's section.

"Should I wear the white brocade dress embroidered with silk?"

And pretending to wear it, Alice danced around in all her glory.

Michelle stopped looking for Millard Fillmore's clothes and said, "The dress looks amazing on you, Alice."

"Oh, but look at this ivory-colored sacque dress with embroidered flowers."

"Also spectacular," Michelle said. "Dolley Madison had great taste."

"I don't know, Alice, about the full skirt and long train. Don't you agree it's too much?" Ethel said, with one hand on Andrew Jackson's coat and one eye on Alice's outfit.

"You are right. I think this dress is better for me," Alice said, picking up a silk-satin cream-colored one with a low-cut bodice, always wanting to attract attention by shocking. The low cut would make people whisper. She would go downstairs where the rest of the guests were gathered and make a grand entrance—sure to get everyone's attention.

“Why don’t you wear one of President Madison’s waistcoats?” Ethel said, showing Alice a pale-blue rep silk embroidered in black straw and steel spangles.

“Hmm, yes. I like that very much. I think I will wear both Dolley’s dress and James Madison’s waistcoat,” Alice announced. “They go well together.”

“And you will get two points.”

Michelle was watching in awe at the little sister helping the big sister on getting points.

“I can’t find much on Fillmore,” Michelle told them, scratching her head.

“Me neither,” Ethel said.

Then, putting a corn pipe to her mouth, she added, “I guess Andrew Jackson wasn’t as much a dresser as he was a corn-pipe smoker.”

“Should you put this in your mouth?” Alice said, concerned. “It’s very old and dirty.”

Ethel shrugged her shoulders and spit in a spittoon.

“Disgusting—just like Jackson did I’m sure, spitting in a spittoon,” Alice said.

“I’m sure he did too. There are twenty of them, all marked AJ 1834, under military uniforms. Twenty-one points for me.”

The president laughed.

“I found something! I found something!” Michelle proclaimed, all excited, holding a lavender silk dress with a bodice and a skirt. “It belonged to President Fillmore’s wife.”

“I love the color. Try it,” Ethel said, adding, “How about me? Isn’t there anything for me?”

“I’m sure there is something for you. Keep on searching,” Michelle said reassuringly, trying to put the dress on. “But you won’t find dresses that belonged to Andrew Jackson’s wife

because she died before he was elected president. Remember, President Jackson fought in many important battles. He did more than my president. There has got to be many documents. I read he was the president of the common man."

"I read that too," Ethel said.

Ethel rummaged through the hanging clothes above the spittoons, and partly hidden and way off to the side, she found a card announcing a section dedicated to the seventh president, Andrew Jackson.

"That makes sense right above Andrew Jackson's spittoons," Alice said, laughing.

"Finally," Ethel said, beaming, pulling a blue uniform coat with gold-colored buttons on the front and on the sleeves and epaulettes. "Exquisite."

She tried it on.

"This is big on you, little sister," Alice said, laughing. "But what a great-looking uniform!"

"I love the gold buttons and...the thing with fringes on the shoulder," Michelle said, jiggling the hanging cords. "Andrew Jackson knew how to make a statement."

"You mean the epaulettes," Alice said.

"Yes. It looks like a fancy little mop," Michelle said, laughing.

Edith put her hand in one pocket of the uniform and found a Battle of New Orleans, 1815, note signed by Andrew Jackson and a chess piece signed by him.

"Two points," Ethel said, smiling, showing the note and the chess piece. "This chess piece and this 1815 Battle of New Orleans note have Andrew Jackson's signature."

"Good for you, Ethel," Michelle said. "I told you he fought many battles. I'm sure if you keep looking, you will find more stuff about his battles."

“Did you know he played chess?” Ethel asked, looking at the king piece.

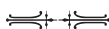
“No, but I am not surprised. I think chess was most presidents’ favorite game,” Michelle said, admiring the chess piece. “A king for a king. And so befitting. Andrew Jackson was called King Andrew,” she added, laughing.

“Here, take a closer look,” Ethel said, handing over the king. “I need to check the other pockets.”

“By the way, Ethel, I love your Andrew Jackson’s look,” Michelle said.

Ethel put her hand in the pocket and said, “Have you ever seen a coat with so many buttons?”

“No,” Alice replied.



“I found something else,” Ethel said, pulling out a small book. “It’s about the game of chess. It’s called *Analysis of the Game of Chess*.”

“Jackson must really have been into the game,” Michelle said. “He carried the book with him.”

Ethel opened it and read, “‘Monroe, may your next move be as good as your last one. Share some of the strategies with my good friend Madison. Let’s play soon.’”

“Why is the book in King Andrew’s pocket?” Ethel asked.

Michelle shrugged her shoulder, offering an idea. “Maybe Monroe lent him the book.”

“As good friends often do,” Alice said.

“But look, Michelle, there is another note about chess inside the book. It’s from Millard Fillmore to his son,” Ethel said.

“The book made all the rounds. What does the note say?”

“Add this book to your list of books to read. Learning from an expert on the game will give you more time to study practical matters,” Ethel read. “Fillmore somehow got the *Analysis of the Game of Chess*.”

“Great advice,” Alice said.

“Popular book with the presidents,” Michelle said. “Maybe David would like to read it one day.”

“Here, Michelle, add this to your pile of objects for more points,” Ethel said, giving her the book.

“Hmm, Ethel?” Alice said, questioning the move. “Not so fast. I heard Madison’s name mentioned. So why is Michelle getting the book?”

Michelle looked at both Alice and Ethel, unsure about what to do.

“There, Ethel, take the book back,” Michelle said, handing the book over. “It’s OK.”

Ethel thought for a second and, shaking her head, said, “No, you keep the book. I made the right decision by giving it to you. Fillmore wrote a note in the book, and Madison didn’t.”

“If that’s the case, you are right, Ethel,” Alice said, conceding. “Your point, Michelle.”

Alice went back to looking at James Madison’s clothes.

“Thank you, Alice. What a great outfit!” Michelle told Ethel. “I love your look, Andrew Jackson.”

“We all look very presidential,” Ethel said proudly.

Both looked at themselves dressed in old oversize costumes and laughed, dancing around.

Something fell on the ground.

“Look, this fell out of your pocket,” Michelle said, handing her a Bible, one of the objects that had fallen out. “Why don’t you check it out?”

“Really?”

Ethel took the Bible, opened it up, and read. “A Bible, and it’s Andrew Jackson’s. It is signed and dated 1830.”

“Lucky you,” Michelle said. “My turn to find more stuff, but first, this also fell.”

“What?” Ethel asked.

“This,” Michelle said, handing her the cylinder piece of wood with holes.

“What is it?” Edith asked, examining the tube.

“I’d say it’s part of a flute. Why don’t you look in your outfit for more pieces?”

“OK.”

Michelle watched as Ethel searched the pockets of Jackson’s uniform.

“No, there is nothing else,” Ethel said. “Let’s look at his other uniforms.”

The girls went back to look at Jackson’s clothes, and feeling around the uniforms, they found two other parts in another jacket.

“Here are two more parts,” Ethel said, excited.

“Let me put the pieces together and see if it is a flute.”

Ethel watched as she assembled the instrument.

Michelle gave her the flute and said, “Yes it is a flute. Try and see if it makes music.”

Ethel put the flute in her mouth and started playing.

“Lovely sound, Ethel. Let me play one of my country-men’s piano pieces that goes well with the flute,” Paderewski said, overhearing her play the flute.

“Isn’t that Chopin?” Michelle asked.

“Yes,” Paderewski answered. “You have heard of him?”

“Yes,” Michelle said. “I love music, and I listened to a

lot of classical music. Chopin is my favorite. I'm learning to play one of his pieces."

Paderewski didn't ask which piece. Michelle was happy he didn't. She didn't want to play in front of Paderewski.

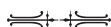
"Which other composers do you play?" Paderewski asked Michelle.

"I'm learning to play Mozart and Beethoven," Michelle said.

"Great composers but not easy," Paderewski said.

Michelle, Alice, and Ethel approached the piano and listened to Paderewski play.

CHAPTER 17



ALL ABOUT BASEBALL

“Hey, Quentin, what are you doing over there with all these boxes? Did you find something?” David asked, walking to the farthest part of the attic—nothing he liked better than exploring attics and dark corners, always looking for an adventure and things to discover. From afar, he had spotted an old brown steamer trunk with brass nails.

“I haven’t found anything else,” Q shouted, trying very hard not to tip the wall of boxes over. “How about you?”

“No, I’m looking,” David answered. “I’m going to check this trunk in the corner. Are you coming?”

“Yes. I’ll be right there,” Q said, putting the last box on top of a wall.

Impatient, David opened the lid of the steamer trunk. An odd-smelling, musty odor attacked his senses.

“Yuck,” David said, fanning his face. “What’s that smell!” He rapidly closed the lid.

Quentin quickly showed up at the trunk.

“What are you doing?” Quentin said. “Open it—it’s one of those very old and abandoned trunks.”

“I did open it, but the smell is soooo bad,” David said. “I doubt there is anything good in it.”

“It’s just old and neglected,” Q said. “The gang never paid attention to it. Now I’m curious to see what’s in it.”

“I find it hard to believe that this is another thing you haven’t investigated,” David said.

“We haven’t been in the White House that long,” Quentin said.

“Perhaps you will find something that belonged to Andrew Johnson in here.”

“Maybe...I don’t think there is much more than what I have already found, according to the book on presidents.”

“I’m glad you did find some stuff. I thought you said President Johnson didn’t do anything,” David said.

“I was wrong. I found out he loved baseball,” Q said. “When he was young, he spent hours playing ‘Cat and Bass Ball and Bandy’ with the kids in his neighborhood.”

“I never heard of Cat and Bass Ball. I assume ‘Bass Ball’ means baseball,” David said.

“Yep.”

David opened the trunk one more time. Quentin, without paying attention to the stinky smell, dove right in.

“Look what I found,” Q said, waving a piece of paper. “An invitation inviting the Washington Nationals and the Brooklyn Atlantics to the White House, signed by Andrew Johnson.”

“Wow! You must have known about the invite being in there,” David said. “Let me see that.”

“I did not know,” Q said truthfully, showing the 1865 invitation.

David, a baseball lover, was very impressed, "Incredible," he said.

"It was the first time an organized baseball team came to the White House."

"Wow, Quentin! This is huge."

"I don't know. I love baseball, but my father prefers football. He says that football is hard, rough, requiring courage, endurance, and discipline, just like soldiers who train for war. Other presidents were big baseball fans. I learned Grover Cleveland brought the first professional team to the White House. President Arthur brought the first major league."

"A big point for you," David said. "You are a big baseball fan knowing all these facts. I love baseball, too, and football. And I didn't know any of that stuff."

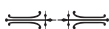
David closed the trunk and sat on it, looking at Quentin with a different eye.

"Did you know Jefferson didn't like baseball?"

"No. Do you know something else about presidents and baseball at the White House?"

"Yes, Harrison displayed a large baseball scorecard on the mantelpiece, and people loved him for loving baseball."

"That's my president," Frost said, looking a little lost in this attic filled with old stuff.



Quentin, searching his pocket, said, "Mr. Frost, have you lost your marbles?"

Shocked, Frost looked at Quentin, not knowing what to say.

"Quentee, that's not a nice thing to say?" the president said. "You..."

“But, Father, it’s true,” Quentin said.

“Quentin, you...” the president was interrupted one more time.

“Father, I found these in President Tyler’s uniform,” Quentin said, giving the marbles to Robert Frost. “One was on the floor, and I thought maybe Mr. Frost had lost it looking for President Tyler’s stuff.”

Frost and the president cracked up laughing.

“It looks like you lost your marbles, my friend,” the president told Robert Frost.

“By the way, Tippecanoe died three weeks after becoming president. There is no information about him liking baseball. Ben Harrison, his grandson, loved baseball and was the first seated president to attend a major league game,” Quentin said.

“I’d love to see that baseball scorecard. Quentin, do you know if that card is here?” Frost asked Q.

“I’d love to see an old baseball scorecard too,” David said.

“I’m sure if we look we will find one. Do you keep a scrapbook?” Q asked.

“No,” David replied, surprised to be asked that. “But I should...Why do you ask?”

“President Hayes had a scrapbook of the Cincinnati Red Stockings and toured with it in 1869.”

“You know a lot about baseball. More stuff I didn’t know.”

“My friends and I love baseball and know all about it,” Q said. “You want to play baseball with the Madrids, the White House gang team?”

“Sure. Where?”

“Here, on the South Lawn,” Quentin replied. “We will play like the professionals do.”

"How? What do you mean?" David asked, very curious.

"We will carve a huge baseball diamond just like the major league. You can't play serious baseball without one."

"Ha ha, you are right. I'd love to play baseball on the White House lawn," David said, all excited. "Are girls allowed?"

"Hmm." Quentin scratched his head. "My sisters play sometimes. So yes."

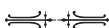
"Are your sisters good?"

"So-so," Q answered. "How is Michelle?"

"Michelle is very good—she is better than a lot of boys," David answered.

"I'll believe it when I see her play," Quentin said, doubtful.

"Wait till I tell Michelle. She will be thrilled," David said, happy.



"If you win, why don't we all play baseball?" Q suggested.

"That's an idea. What else did you find on President Johnson?" David asked.

"A funny note written by Senator Sumner accepting the president's apology for using his hat as a spittoon."

"Who does that? Who spits in someone's hat?"

"President Johnson did."

"Wow!"

"I also found a poster offering a hundred thousand dollars for the capture of a guy he didn't like named Jefferson Davis, signed by him."

"That's a lot of money," David said. "Who was he?"

"I don't know," Q said.

"Anything else?"

“A copy of the Navajo Treaty,” Q said. “Don’t ask me what it’s about because I don’t know that, either, and I got a copy of the Alaska Purchase paper.”

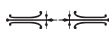
“The Alaska Purchase, that’s a big deal,” David said. “Alaska is the biggest state in the country.”

“Really?”

“Yes.”

“My president signed that paper,” Q said. “And I found some fireplace irons with his name.”

“Quentin, and you thought there was nothing on your president,” David said.



“I also found a checkerboard that belonged to him,” Quentin asked, “Do you play checkers?”

“Yes, but I’d rather play chess,” David said.

“Jefferson played a game of goose and a game of chess. Chess was his favorite game,” Quentin said. “Are you good?”

“Kind of. I’m learning.”

“The French court gave Jefferson a beautiful chess set,” the president said, suddenly showing up.

“Is it here at the White House?” David asked.

“No, it’s at Monticello, but I’m sure if you look around, you might find a chess set that belonged to him. He had many chess sets and many bags of chess pieces, which he gave away freely.”

“Father, you play both checkers and chess. Which one do you like best?”

“Chess is the king of all games,” the president said. “It’s a mental game as well as a game of skill, patience, and strategy. It teaches me patience. Most the presidents played

chess, and all presidents played games. I also like backgammon. So did Jefferson and Madison.”

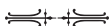
“Father, David plays chess,” Q told his father.

“Great thinking game,” the president said. “See that table behind you, David? It’s a game table where lots of presidents have played many different games, like chess and checkers.”

“And Nine Men’s Morris and cards, haven’t they?” Q said.

“Yes.”

“Come take a look, David.”



David followed Quentin to the game table and started flipping the top of the table with different layers, showing different games. Quentin opened a drawer and found cards and a box. He opened it and found a pair of gold cufflinks with an engraving.

“David, I can’t read the engraving—help me,” Q begged David, giving him the cufflinks.

David turned the cufflinks around and upside down and finally said, “‘AJ 1866.’”

“My president,” Q said. “Father, I found lots of stuff on Andrew Johnson. These gold cufflinks are his.”

“Very nice. I would expect the best cufflinks to go along with the suits of the Tennessee Tailor,” the president said. “Great work, Quentin.”

Quentin proudly smiled.

“I’m happy you stayed the course and fought the battle—you are winning many points,” the president said.

“I’m surprised myself. Michelle and Ethel told me what they read about him. So it helped. All I had to do was search.

And by golly, I found stuff. Do you know he taught himself to write and read?" Quentin asked David.

"No," David said, surprised. "And he became president—heh."

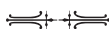
"No wonder he didn't understand lots of stuff. Do you think that's why he didn't understand people?" Q asked.

"I don't know," David answered.

"People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care," the president answered.

"Like my father says, only in America is everything possible because America is the land where dreams come through if you work hard enough," David said. "President Johnson must have worked very hard to become president."

"Ha ha ha," the president laughed. "America is the land of opportunities."



"OK, opportunities, opportunities...Let's go find more things," David told Quentin.

"Why go anywhere? See that swivel chair behind this chest?"

"Yeah."

"It's Jefferson's."

"Really?" David went to the chair and sat in it.

"It's not just a chair. It's a Thomas Jefferson's chair. You have to spin to get the idea," Quentin said, spinning the chair around and around and around.

"You dizzy yet?"

"Yes."

"See what I mean?"

“Fun,” David said, giggling, putting his feet down to stop the spinning and almost stepping on a banjo.

Quentin picked up the banjo and started playing.

“Quentin is also into music,” Edith Wharton said, amused.

Bitzer was filming.

“Hey, Quentin, it’s my banjo. Well, rather, it’s Chester Arthur’s, my president,” London said, laughing.

“Oops, sorry,” Q said, giving the banjo to London. “All yours.”

“Jefferson is fascinating. I want to see what else there is about him. I want to win, so I have got to find more stuff.”

“OK, I’ll help you. I have got nothing else to do. I found all there is on Andrew Johnson. Jefferson is fun.”

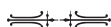
“Look, there is another old chest over there standing all by itself,” David said.

“But you haven’t explored the trunk yet,” Q said.

“It stinks. Let’s come back to it later. The one over in the opposite corner looks interesting,”

“OK.”

CHAPTER 18



THE SECRET DECODER

This dark part of the attic was also very much on its own and smelling musty, just like the steamer trunk. David still couldn't see very well. He had to fight many spider webs along the short way to the other chest.

"Lots of spider webs on the way to this one. I smell forgotten treasures," David said, laughing.

"Look, how about this isolated chest in the corner?" Q asked David.

"There are many in the attic that haven't been opened," David said. "We have not opened this one either."

He reached the faded red chest, wondering what would be in there this time.

"I finally can see. This one is the dustiest chest I have seen so far," David said, passing his hand on the cover, shaking the dust on Q.

"Hey, watch out," Q said, brushing dust off his clean shirt. "For once I have kept my shirt clean."

Opening the very old red oak trunk, he was ready for the stinky assault this time.

"I like this old trunk. It must have lots of secrets."

He felt lots of smelly clothes and pulled them out. They were jackets, breeches, vests, and shirts.

"I don't know...Suits and more suits," David said. "I already have Jefferson's clothes on."

"Lots of these chests have clothes in."

"Got a jacket full of holes," David said, looking at the moth-eaten jacket.

"You needed a jacket, didn't you? Does it matter if it has a few holes?" Quentin said.

David looked at the ancient jacket, unsure if he should put it on or look for another one.

"David, stop looking at it and put Jefferson's jacket on," Q told David.

"OK, but now it's your turn to finish dressing up," David said, adding the last touch to the costume.

"Dress up? Can't you see I am?" Q said, pointing to the bow tie.

"Funny, but you need the whole look," David said. "Just like me."

Quentin, going one hundred miles a minute with his body half inside the trunk, was throwing clothes out of the trunk.

"I think I just found one of the many suits Johnson made himself."

"How do you know?"

"The label says 'Andrew Johnson, Tennessee tailor.'"

"Put it on," David told Quentin.

Quentin slowly put the jacket on. "Huge," he said.

"Now I do feel like Jefferson," David said, trying to adjust the long black jacket sleeves that kept getting in the way as

he was trying to get an object in the shape of a ball out of the right front side.

"Those sleeves are a nuisance," David said, finally pulling the ball with lines and roman numerals out.

"That's Jefferson's sundial," Quentin said. "It tells time."

"I know sundials tell time, but Jefferson, heh—now that's fascinating. I know a lot about sundials," David bragged, "but I have never heard of a Jefferson sundial."

"Why not?"

"I know about the Greeks and the Romans. They had sundials thousands of years ago," David said, inspecting Jefferson's.

"That's a better sundial—it's an American sundial," Quentin said proudly. "It's a few years old."

David grinned. "I get a point." He then put the sundial down on a stand sitting on a writing desk where a Bible was resting.

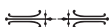
"That writing desk was also Jefferson's," Quentin said.

"How about the Bible? And all these books," David said. "Jefferson did say he couldn't live without books. There are hundreds here."

"Yep, that's his Bible. You get one more point, plus hundreds of points for all these books."

"You know what?" David said. "That's not fair to you—you should have gotten Jefferson. You are a Jefferson expert."

"I know," Quentin said. "But I really don't know all."



"What do you think, are there more things in here?"

Without waiting for an answer, David went back to digging into the trunk.

"I found another letter from Jefferson, addressed to Benjamin Banneker, thanking him for his almanac," David said. "Who is Benjamin Banneker?"

"He was the first black scientist of the New World," the president answered. "He was an astronomer and a mathematician. Unfortunately, not much is known about him because a fire destroyed most of his papers and belongings."

"I could be in the attic for a long time reading all of Jefferson's letters," David told the president.

"You could be," the president agreed, going to check on the adults.

David continued his search, with Quentin staying close by.

"I found another object. It's very cold," David said. "But I can't tell what it is." Again his sleeves were getting in the way. "Do I have to wear this jacket?"

"Yes."

"I don't remember this being a rule."

"You missed that part."

"Oh, it's a bottle," David said, the bottle slipping from his hand as he was trying to pull the sleeves up.

"Hey, careful," Quentin reprimanded, catching the bottle. "You almost lost five points."

"Another rule I missed."

"Yep," Q said.

"Look at that. This bottle has a ship inside," David said, intrigued by the tiny ship.

"There are lots of those bottles around," Q said.

"That was a major hobby in those days," David said.

"The ship's name is USS *Pennsylvania*—world's largest ship," Q read out loud.

"One more point," David said scrutinizing the tiny replica of the war ship. "Amazing—how can they build a ship inside a bottle?"

"Magic."

"Funny, Quentin."

Quentin said, "False alarm. There is a tiny note on the ship that says 'to President Andrew Jackson.'"

"That's OK," David said. "I have lots of books, objects, letters, and documents, including a draft of the Declaration of Independence. I know I'll get a point for it because most have his initials. But what is this cylinder with letters on it?"

"You will," Q said. "It's Jefferson's decoder wheel. When he was minister to France, he needed to send messages that no one would be able to read except Americans, so he invented this wheel cipher."

"You mean that wooden minican is a secret decoder?" David said, picking up the cylinder.

"Yes."

"Spies, heh," David said, turning the cylinder every which way. "That thing does look complicated though."

"It is. There is a trick to it. You have to know how to turn it," Q said. "Give it to me. I'll show you."

David gave him the decoder, curious to see how it worked.

"Watch."

"See, there are thirty-six wooden wheels with letters of the alphabet carved into the edge of each wheel that are attached to a pin," Quentin said. "You turn the wooden wheel to make a word, that's all."

"I see," David said.

"Now keep an eye on the decoder."

David watched Quentin turn the wheels on the cylinder.

"I see a message," Quentin said seriously. "You want to know what it says?"

"Of course."

"It says enter the secret room by going through Tad Lincoln's jail, and you will find the bones you are looking for."

"No, I don't believe you. Come on, Q, does it really say that? You are making that up," David said, laughing, examining the decoder. "Bones."

"No, I'm not. I'm very serious," Quentin answered, laughing.

"I still can't see any words."

"It's because it's a secret decoder, and I know how to decode, and you don't."

"Well, no matter," David said. "It's worth a try. I'd love to go look for mastodons' bones. It will be fun no matter what."

"Yep," Quentin said, enjoying this. "Let's go now."

"First, let me tell Ethel about the bottle," David said, still looking at all the objects inside the chest. "I found this chest with all these interesting things, thanks to you. This is the best chest of all the chests in the attic. I can't stop searching."

"Why do you want to tell Ethel about the bottle?" Quentin asked. "Don't you want to win?"

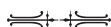
"Yes, I don't think it will matter, and Ethel needs points."

"OK."

"Before we go to Tad's jail, give me a minute. I want to make sure there is nothing else of importance in the chest."

"OK, take your time. I just thought of something. I'll be right back," Quentin said, looking for a rush.

CHAPTER 19



WHO IS WINNING?

“Ethel, come and see what Andrew Jackson left behind,” David shouted while pushing things around in the chest.

“What?”

“Come and see,” David said.

Ethel rushed over.

“Did you find something that belonged to Andrew Jackson?” Ethel asked nonchalantly. “Sure did,” David said, handing her the bottle with the ship inside.

“Beautiful,” Ethel said, examining the tiny ship inside the bottle. “It does say AJ on it. One more point for me. Thank you, David, I really appreciate this. What are you doing?”

“I’m looking for more documents for my president while waiting for Q,” David said, emptying the chest full of objects and papers. “How about that! There are not only

Jefferson's papers but other presidents," he added, looking through a bunch of papers.

"Michelle, Alice, come over here quick," Ethel called out to the girls. "Jefferson, ha ha ha—found a treasure chest with hundreds of important papers."

Michelle and Alice all dressed up rushed over as David was busy reading documents.

"You did?" Alice asked David.

"Yes," David said, looking at Alice, then at Michelle then at Ethel. "Here is a letter between Madison and Jefferson. Do you want these?"

"Of course we do," they all answered together.

"Wow! Alice, your outfit is beautiful. You look like..." David couldn't think of a name.

"I'm the first First Lady," Alice said.

"Martha Washington?" David said, taking a second look.

"No, silly. I'm Dolley Madison," Alice said vexed.

"Just joking," a blushing David said, embarrassed. "I don't know anything about fashion."

"Martha Washington was known as Lady Washington. James Madison was the first to say that the First Lady has the role of mother of the nation. So Dolley was truly the first First Lady. She was more than just the president's wife—she was a role model for the nation," Alice explained.

"I'm learning, and you, Michelle, you are..." David said, still stuck on a possible name examining Michelle.

"I'm President Millard Fillmore's wife, Abigail," Michelle said, spinning around.

"It makes sense. I should have known," David said, going back to his search.

"How about me?" Ethel asked him. "Who am I?"

David stopped his search and looked up at Ethel.

"I know. You are Andrew Jackson, your president of course," David answered.

"You guessed right," Ethel said, happy he recognized who she represented.

"Back to the papers," David said seriously. "Until Quentin gets back."

"What will happen when Quentin gets back?" Michelle asked.

"He is taking me to Tad Lincoln's jail."

"Why?"

"We are going to look for mastodons' bones."

"I want to go too," Michelle said.

"OK."

"By the way, you look very handsome, Mr. Jefferson," Ethel said.

"Thank you," David said uncomfortable.

"Look, this is addressed to Millard Fillmore," Michelle said excitedly. "My president...It's about time I get something official with his name."

"There are so many letters," Ethel said, thumbing through all the letters.

"It looks like we could all be winners," Alice said, laughing.

They all sat on the ground going through hundreds of pages.

"What are you guys doing so focused on?" Quentin asked, coming back with a scary-looking doll hiding under his jacket. "Aren't you tired of playing this game? Aren't you ready for some good times? David, are you ready?"

"Almost," David answered.

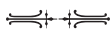
Looking over everyone's shoulder, he was pretending to be interested in what was going on.

He had something up his sleeve. He was ready for a change.

"We are finding all kinds of stuff on our presidents. Why don't you join us?" Ethel said.

"Sorry, not now. David and I are going to Tad Lincoln's jail," Q answered.

Michelle looked at David, pleading with her eyes for him to stick around.



Ethel went back to reading the papers she had found.

"Quentin, let's wait a minute," David told Quentin.

"OK."

"I didn't realize Andrew Jackson did so much. I found another document saying he founded the Democratic Party. And there is another one saying every white male had the right to vote. And another one about trade agreement with Great Britain. And how about that! He even signed a law creating the oceanic US exploring expedition," Ethel said.

"Really?" David said. "An oceanic expedition...That's amazing."

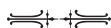
"Madison did just as much," Alice said melodramatically, holding an outline for the new Constitution. "And here is a draft of the Bill of Rights and a paper with his name along with Jefferson on the Louisiana Purchase."

"Of course, Alice, you always do better than everyone else," Ethel said sarcastically, stopping her from mentioning more documents she had found.

"You are so immature," Alice said in a condescending way. "And jealous."

"No, I am not," Ethel said. "Why would I not be able to find as many documents as you even though I'm much younger than you?"

"Pshaw! Age has nothing to do with this game," Alice said haughtily.



"What about you, Michelle? How are you doing?" Ethel asked.

"I'm having fun, but I'm afraid Millard Fillmore doesn't compete with any of your presidents," Michelle said, holding a copy of the Compromise of 1850. "But I'm learning a lot."

"Don't worry—you will find more," Ethel said emphatically.

Unknowingly to the deep-in-thought group so busy in their search, they had not seen the president approach. He liked what he saw.

"Interesting. I found something different," Michelle said. "A sheet of music titled 'Virginia Polka,' by Thomas 'Blind Tom' Wiggins, dedicated to President Buchanan, 1860 or '59. He must have been important. Who was he?"

"Blind Tom is a blind musical genius who plays the piano and is the first black man to perform at the White House," the president answered. "He was only eleven when he played at the White House."

"Eighteen sixty—wasn't that before President Lincoln freed all the slaves?"

"Yes."

"And he was allowed to play in the White House?" Ethel said.

“Yes. He was not only black during a difficult time in our history, but blind with a learning disability,” the president answered.

“A learning disability?” Q asked, suddenly interested.

“Blind Tom only learned sounds—he replicates music and other sounds after only one hearing. His one skill was to play the piano.”

“People all over the country and even abroad wanted to hear him play. Mark Twain saw him play many times.”

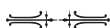
Whenever Caruso heard the word *music*, he couldn’t help but participate.

“*O me presidente muy bono...Eternamente...*” Caruso sang, opening his jacket, delighted to show the unusual lining, adding, “President Buchanan, my president, had a great ear.”

“He certainly did,” President Roosevelt laughed. “We are almost done with the game.”

“A few more minutes,” Ethel begged.

“I’m done with the game,” Quentin yelled. “And so is David.”



“Well girls, I don’t want to rain on your parade, but check this out,” David said. “I have here objects and documents signed by Jefferson—one hundred and fifty-seven, as a matter of fact. Just to mention a few: a note that says all men are created equal, another note about a meeting at Raleigh tavern to discuss the Intolerable Acts, and a note to Madison that says ‘a little rebellion now and then is a good thing...’”

“A note to Madison—I should get a point too,” Alice said, interrupting him.

“Well, let’s see,” David said, counting the Jefferson

documents in his possession. "Yep, I got one hundred and fifty-seven so far, so I can give you one."

David looked through the documents very carefully and decided on one.

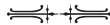
"I found thirty items with Madison's name on them," Alice said. "There are twelve thousand more somewhere."

"There. I will give you the letter Jefferson wrote to Madison from Paris: 'the earth belongs always to the living generation,'" David told Alice.

"Please, David, Alice doesn't need your help," Ethel begged plaintively. "I'm the one who needs help."

"OK, Ethel, I did see a letter from Jefferson to Jackson dated 1803 over in the red chest," David said, pointing to it.

"Great!" Ethel said, going to the red chest.



"I don't see the point in continuing this game," Quentin said. "Jefferson is *the* winning president."

Quentin went to sit in Jefferson's swivel chair, spinning around to pass the time.

"You are forgetting about Lincoln. I could win," Archie said, approaching and looking for documents belonging to Lincoln.

"Quentin, what are you talking about?" Alice argued. "I could win. I have quite a few things belonging to James Madison, the father of our Constitution."

"Abe was a more incredible president. He led through the Civil War, the bloodiest war ever, preserving the Union. There are a lot of documents on what he did during his presidency. I can win. There are seventy thousand documents written by and to Lincoln."

"There are twenty-six thousand documents with Jackson's signature," Ethel said.

"Thanks, David, I got one more letter," Ethel said, winking at Michelle. Not only was she holding a corn pipe, but she didn't want to tell anyone how many documents she was now holding. She had more than Alice. Scouring the room, she spotted posters and swords but not enough to beat Jefferson.

"What other documents do you have?" Alice asked David, suspecting him to have documents with other presidents' names. "Maybe Madison is on more notes too."

"I have Jefferson's 1801 inaugural address," David said, reading the document.

"We all have their inaugural addresses," Alice said sarcastically.

"Great, so we all get a point for those," David replied. "I found seventy-five letters he wrote to various people."

"Let me see," Alice demanded. "Jefferson and Madison wrote to each other a lot."

"No problem."

Alice carefully inspected the letters. "Well, what do you know? This Jefferson letter is addressed to the king of Spain, recommending James Madison as extraordinary minister. That's a combined point."

"Let Father decide that," said Ethel, who was always authoritative.

"And how about the Declaration of Independence?" Alice said. "Didn't Madison sign it?"

"No, he didn't. John Adams and Jefferson did," the president said. "But Madison was involved with the Constitution and is the father of the Constitution."

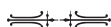
“Why didn’t Madison sign the Declaration of Independence?”

“In 1776, he was just starting his political career.”

“But was Madison old enough to be called one of the founding fathers of the United States?”

“Yes. He helped form the country’s new government, as did Washington, Jefferson, Hamilton, Franklin, Adams, and John Jay. Remember, the Constitution was signed eleven years after the Declaration of Independence. Madison had more political experience in 1787.”

CHAPTER 20



QUENTIN'S SCARY PRANK

Spinning, swiveling quietly in Jefferson's chair, and listening, Quentin, playing with Andrew Johnson's checker piece, decided he had enough of this serious conversation.

He waited for the room to be very quiet; not a voice was heard except for the sound of shuffling paper. Everyone was busy counting their documents.

He looked around and smirked mischievously.

No one was looking in his direction.

He took the nightmarish-looking doll out from inside his jacket and cranked a handle on the back of the doll. A creepy, hair-raising voice sounded.

"Oh dear mamma, your dolly is tired now. Put me in my little bed, dear Mama?"

Quiet was broken.

Michelle jumped up. "What's happening?"

The birds went crazy, squawking loud.

Loretta panicky flew around. "Who are you? Who are you?"

Jack barked.

The haunting voice was heard again.

"Sticks and stones may break bones but..."

Loretta said, flying erratically, "Who are you? Who are you?" drowning the eerie voice.

"Who is talking?" Michelle asked.

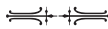
"Is it the Loretta talking?" Edith Wharton asked. "Her voice is disturbing. I couldn't make out what she was saying."

"Oh dear Mama," repeated the frightening voice.

"It's not a bird, that's for sure!" Henry James said.

Everyone walked around the room, looking for the place where the voice came from.

Quentin was quietly laughing cranking the doll again. "Finally, something fun is happening."



"What's all the raucous about?" the president asked.

"I heard a ghost," Houdini said.

"Really!" laughed the president.

"The ghosts are coming out to haunt us," Edith Wharton said.

"Like I said, we hear ghosts all the time," Archie said. "It's Mary Todd Lincoln screaming because she saw her son's ghost at the foot of her bed."

"Wouldn't that be something!" Michelle said, fascinated.

"I want to see a ghost," David said, walking toward Quentin, who was abnormally quiet, now sitting on a trunk.

"Me too," Michelle said.

"Quentin, is that you?" David asked Quentin.

Quentin sat there motionless and expressionless.

"Oh, it's you—of that I'm almost certain," David said, looking around Quentin.

"What?" Quentin answered innocently.

"Let's listen to see if we can really hear Mary Todd Lincoln," Ethel said.

"That's nonsense," Alice said.

"Maybe we will hear Jackson stomping and swearing," Archie said.

"I want to hear Jefferson play the violin," Michelle said.

"Sh," David said, all excited, keeping an eye on Quentin.

"The maid said that the Rose Room is the most haunted room in the White House," Ethel said. "I don't remember what she said about the attic."

"Can we see the Rose Room?" David asked.

"Why? The action is here now," Houdini said.

"A Ghost House!" Frost said in a detached manner.

"How about that?" Michelle said. "The White House is a ghost house!"

David snickered.

"Who believes in Ghosts?" Jack London responded, teasing.

Everyone was all ears.

"I do. Who else?" Michelle asked, looking around.

"I, for one, even though I do not believe in ghosts, I am afraid of them," Edith Wharton said.

"Then, don't look in the Jolly Corner," Henry James said, laughing.

"Consequences!" Kipling retorted.

"Where is the jolly corner?" David asked.

"I'm not sure what you are talking about," Ethel said.

"Every corner is jolly in the attic," Archie said nonchalantly.

"I can help and hunt out the ghost for you," Houdini offered.

"No need. Here is your ghost. I recognized the voice of a doll," the president said, approaching Quentin, jumping down from the trunk. "Quentin, you have been too quiet. Do you have the doll?"

"Doll," Michelle said, grinning.

"Quentin, of course," Edith Wharton said, laughing.

"Yes, Father," Quentin replied, taking the strange doll out of his oversize jacket and handing it to the president.

"I thought so."

The president took the scary-looking doll with the missing legs and showed everyone the cause of so much turmoil.

"Fooled you," Quentin told David. "Didn't you like the joke?"

David looked at Quentin, disappointed it was a prank, and said, "I was really hoping to see a ghost."

"Sorry, everyone, no ghost," the president said, laughing. "Edison made the world's first talking doll, and this is one of them."

"Creepy," Michelle uttered, turning her eyes away from the doll.

"The eyes," Edith Wharton said. "Haunting!"

"The sound coming from nowhere was spooky," Henry James said, somewhat amused.

"Yes, that voice is," Wharton said. "But the look of that doll is enough to give children a nightmare."

The president took Quentin aside and had a quiet little talk with him. No one could hear what was said. Quentin

was looking at the floor the whole time; then he looked up at his dad and flashed a smile, saying, "OK, Father, I will ask next time."

"In a few more minutes, I'll announce the winner," the president said.

Everyone looked at David, knowing he was the obvious winner.

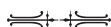
The president was about to leave, wanting to put the doll in a secure place when Quentin decided to make his voice heard.

"Father, I want to play a different game," Quentin said calmly.

"I know," the president said. "Just be patient a little longer. A few more minutes of the president's game, so hold on. I'll be right back."

"All right, Father."

CHAPTER 21



WHICH PRESIDENT WAS AN ARTIST?

“Look where Eli is,” Michelle told everyone.

Eli had landed on a painting by Tad Lincoln’s jail.

“Let me get Eli,” Alice said. “I’m an expert with birds.”

“What’s happening? What’s happening?” Eli shrieked.

Alice, Kermit, Michelle, Ethel, Quentin, and David approached the one with the screaming voice.

“Come here, Eli. It’s OK, Eli,” Alice said softly, approaching the nervous bird, who left the painting and landed on Kermit’s shoulders.

“Let me take care of Eli,” Kermit said.

Kermit quickly took Eli away from the group and outside the attic.

“Oh look! What a beautiful horse!” Michelle exclaimed, looking at a painting. “The horse in the painting looks like my horse.”

“And mine,” Churchill said, holding a rhino, and came to examine the painting close. “I love horses. Horses are my greatest pleasure.”

“So do I,” Michelle said. “My family owns horses. I have my own horse, and I ride him every day. Do you ride?”

“Yes, every day,” Churchill answered. “No hour of life is lost that is spent in the saddle.”

“Maybe Andrew Johnson painted this horse,” Quentin said jokingly.

“I don’t think so,” Alice said, examining the painting.

“How do you know?” Quentin asked, still hopeful.

“Because it is signed by Ulysses Grant,” Alice responded, after spotting the signature.

“My president,” Churchill exclaimed.

“President Grant had a lot in common with you,” the president said, returning after placing the talking doll on top of a high cabinet at the entrance of the attic.

“Horses, cigars and art,” Churchill chuckled.

“And both of you are military men, let’s not forget.”

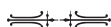
“Indeed.”

“Father, was President Grant really an artist?” Quentin asked.

“He was.”

“By golly, I can’t catch a break,” little Quentin said, frustrated. “Why couldn’t my president be at least an artist?”

CHAPTER 22



HOW DID THE RHINO GET A WRINKLED SKIN?

“I like the rhino you are holding,” Ethel told Churchill.
“Heavy,” Churchill said, tossing it up and down. “I saw quite a few of those in Africa.”

Churchill, not coordinated, tossed it too high; the rhino went flying toward the president’s back. Jack London quickly grabbed it, saving Churchill an embarrassing moment.

“Great move, old chap,” Churchill told London.

“I have got my president’s back at all times,” London replied, laughing, handing the rhino to Kipling, who was next to him.

“This rhino’s skin fits him like a glove,” Kipling said.
“He looks like a Noah’s Ark rhino.”

“His skin is smooth,” David said, looking at the rhino.
“So it’s a fake rhino. Real rhinos have wrinkled skin.”

“Guess what? This rhino didn’t *hear* how it got its skin, that’s for sure,” Michelle added.

“I agree,” David said, laughing.

“How did it get wrinkled skin?” Quentin asked, curious.

“Cake crumbs,” Michelle answered.

Kipling laughed. “Yes, O best beloved, cake crumbs did that.”

“Cake crumbs I don’t understand...Tell me how the rhino gets its wrinkles from cake crumbs.” Q asked, intrigued, not understanding what was going on.

“Mr. Kipling, won’t you tell Q?” Michelle asked.

“Them that takes cakes which the Parsee-man baker makes dreadful mistakes,” Kipling said seriously.

“What? I don’t understand,” Q said.

Michelle said, “The rhino stole a cake from the Parsee.”

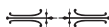
“Parsee?”

“A religious man from India,” David answered.

“So as punishment, the Parsee put cake crumbs inside the rhino’s coat, and that made him very itchy. He scratched, rolled, and rubbed his skin on a tree, and he rubbed so hard that he rubbed his skin into a fold over his shoulder, underneath his body, and on his legs,” Kipling explained.

“I see...but why couldn’t he just take his coat off and shake the crumbs off?” Quentin asked.

Kipling laughed. “This, O Best Beloved, could be another new wonderful story.”



“Stop asking questions, Quentin,” Alice told him. “You have to get on with the story and the game, or you will never win

the game if you don't look for more of your president's objects."

She added, brandishing beautiful blue shoes and Madison's Proclamation of War between Great Britain and the United States, "I already found fifteen things that belong to James Madison."

"And I don't have to look anymore. I found all there is," Quentin said, tickling Ethel's neck with a yellow feather.

"So, now you have a new game," Ethel said, annoyed.

"Yep. By the way, Alice, the shoes are no documents. They didn't belong to Madison. They are simply women's shoes. You lose a point," Q said.

"Are you coming up with some new rules?" Ethel asked Quentin.

Alice didn't wait long to defend herself.

"What do you mean 'simple woman's shoes'? Those shoes belonged to a very important First Lady, Dolley Madison, the president's wife."

Quentin kept on tickling Ethel's neck, who kept shooing away the feather.

Alice looked at him, annoyed. "It doesn't matter. Even if the shoes don't count, I got lots of documents signed by Madison."

The president smiled and nodded, keeping track of everything going on.

"Stop tickling me this instant, Quentin," Ethel, irritated, commanded as she was searching for more documents on Andrew Jackson.

"OK. That feather is important. It belonged to Andrew Johnson's bird," Quentin declared. "A point for me."

"Hmm, Quentin, remember the shoes. A feather is not a document," Alice said, rolling her eyes.

"The feather belonged to Andrew Johnson, not his wife," Q said.

"Actually, it belonged to his bird," Alice said.

"Andrew Johnson didn't have a bird," the president said.

"Sorry, Quentin," Alice said sarcastically.

"But Andrew Jackson did have a gray parrot," the president added.

"Did he curse like Andrew Jackson?" Q asked.

"He did," the president answered.

"That feather belongs to me," Ethel said, grabbing the yellow feather from Quentin. "Andrew Jackson is my president, thank you."

"Ethel, the feather is yellow," Q said. "Andrew Jackson had a gray parrot."

"Ethel, is that good manners?" Alice snickered.

"He teased me," Ethel responded, irked.

"That feather must be mine then," Alice said, energized. "Madison had a macaw."

"Sorry, but this feather belongs to Grover Cleveland's canary," Kermit said, coming back from sitting out the game. "There is a lot going on downstairs. Alice, you like Scott Joplin, don't you? He is now playing."

"Really!" Alice said. "I can't wait to hear him. He is the best. He is so much fun. Who is ready to ragtime dance?"

Alice took Kermit's hands and swirled around him.

"Kermit, how do you know for sure that it was President Cleveland's canary?" Ethel asked, interrupting the dance.

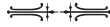
"I don't. I was just putting my two cents' worth, and I know Grover Cleveland had a canary, so it would make sense."

Alice wouldn't give up the fight that easily.

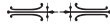
"Quentin, where did you get the feather?" Alice asked, coming back to reality.

"From the red chest over there," Quentin said pointing to it.

"Oh well, it could be any president," Ethel said.



Bitzer was filming.



Michelle and David stayed mum. They were guests observing this funny scene.

"All this pandemonium for a feather," Edith Wharton said, shrugging her shoulders.

"It's very serious. This is all for points, my dear," Henry James said.

"It's all about the game," London said.

"That's no revelation, London," Frost said.

"Ha ha ha," London laughed.

"OK, children, there are many more important objects than a feather. Don't fritter your time away," Theodore Roosevelt said, gesturing and pointing. "I'm very happy you are taking the game to this level—remember, documents defined our presidents. Time is almost up. See what else you can find. I'm still keeping score."

"Father, tell us who is winning so far," Q begged.

"All in due time," the president said. "As of now, you are all winners. Because there are still documents to be found, I have to wait."

“Father, I know you are keeping track of our findings diligently, so you know all about the papers I found,” Alice said. “Some very, very important documents with Madison’s signature.”

“I have, but tell me which ones were the most important to you,” the president asked, deeply interested.

“The Declaration of 1812 War against the British,” Alice said, waving the document she had shown Quentin.

“Very good, Alice,” the president said. “Anything else?”

“A draft of the Constitution, including the Bills of Rights, with his name.”

“Excellent, excellent, that’s a major contribution,” the president said. “He is the father of the Constitution.”

“I know he was one of the Founding Fathers,” Alice replied.

“But, Father, I can’t find much else on Madison that changed the country,” Alice said. “He doesn’t seem to have done a lot as president.”

“Actually, he did. He was crucial in shaping American history as he was the architect of the Constitution and the author of the Bill of Rights,” the president said. “He was also very busy with the War of 1812. All the things you mentioned. But he did other things like enact the first US protective tariff, and he signed the Second Bank charter.”

“Hmm, let me look some more then,” Alice said.

“Father, how about my president, Andrew Jackson? Ethel said. “Look at all the documents I found. One is a letter Andrew Jackson wrote to West Point regarding the requirements needed for Lyncoya’s admittance. But, Father, Lyncoya is a strange name. Who was he?”

“He was a Creek Indian orphan he found during the War of 1812, whom he adopted and raised as his own,” the

president answered. "He was the only president to raise a Native American child as he also was the only president to have been held prisoner of war."

"Prisoner of war?" Archie said.

"Andrew Jackson was a thirteen-year-old soldier during the American Revolution when he was captured by the British."

"He was my age and a prisoner of war," Archie commented. "That must have been hard."

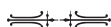
"I found something on that," Ethel said.

"I know that you also found papers mentioning how he served in both the American Revolution and the War of 1812 and that he formed the Democratic Party."

"I did. Was he a good president?" Ethel asked.

"He did all he could to protect American values. He was called the People's President because he believed in giving the power to elect the president and vice president to the American people by abolishing the Electoral College. He also vetoed twelve bills, and he formed a new party, the Democrats, but his only major piece of legislation was the Indian Removal Act," the president said. "Both of you found great documents and many points. Unfortunately, regarding the feather, it doesn't hold its weight."

CHAPTER 23



QUENTIN THE MAGICIAN

“Father, how about circus animals and clowns?” Ethel asked. “Do they count?” pointing at the shelf of carved animals, clowns, circus wagon, and trains.

“Hmm, they could, if they have the president’s signature,” the president answered after reflecting.

“Good. Let’s all look for circus stuff with a president’s signature,” Alice said enthusiastically.

Colorful posters advertising different circuses stood behind the shelf.

“I love these old circus posters,” Michelle said.

Quentin, unhappy, stomped his feet in frustration. “Andrew Johnson liked mice. Did the circus people use mice in their act?”

“Q, why the attitude again? You found many items belonging to Andrew Johnson,” Alice said. “You should be happy.”

“Not enough to win. My president isn’t Jefferson,” Quentin said.

“Quentin, don’t despair; there might be more on Andrew Johnson,” David said, feeling bad for Quentin.

“Like what?” Quentin asked.

“I don’t know. I’m sure there is something else. Do you think any of these animals were gifts given to presidents?” David asked him.

“Circus animals?” Quentin asked, surprised. “Maybe.”

“The early presidents loved the circus,” the president said. “Washington attended the first circus in Philadelphia because he liked to see animals and people work together. Jefferson saw the first American circus show.”

“Jefferson! Always Jefferson,” Quentin replied, pouting.

“Let’s check the circus. There were probably circus gifts given to Andrew Johnson,” David replied, feeling sad for Quentin.

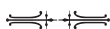
“David is onto something,” the president said. “The Imperial Troupe of Japan did visit Andrew Johnson at the White House.”

“Really!” Quentin exclaimed.

“There were ingenious acrobats and masterful jugglers entertaining the White House early in the century,” the president added.

“So you see, Quentin, maybe the Imperial Troupe gave something to Andrew Johnson.”

“Maybe,” Quentin replied.

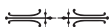


“The Japanese circus was impressive. I learned quite a bit from the San Kich Akimoto troupe,” Houdini said.

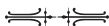
“Really, you learn from a circus! What did you learn?” Quentin asked, suddenly interested.

“You want me to show you?” Houdini asked.

“Yes,” Quentin said, all excited, hoping he would see Houdini reveal how he did magic.



Bitzer was filming.



“Who wants to help me? I need someone to help me,” Houdini, said looking at the group.

“I will, I will,” Q said coming forward.

In the meantime, Houdini took a pair of handcuffs with its key out his pockets and gave them to Quentin.

“What am I supposed to do with handcuffs?” Q asked, taken aback.

“You will see...Quentin, would you please handcuff me and keep the key?” Houdini said.

“You want me to handcuff you?”

“Yes. But before you do, let’s make sure my pockets are empty.”

“Ok.”

“You see, I will free myself of the handcuffs without using the keys.”

“How?” Q asked, adding, all fired up, “I know. Magic.”

“Yes,” Houdini replied.

Houdini dramatically turned his pockets inside out. “Look, everyone, my pockets are empty.”

Everyone watched in silence.

"They certainly are," the president acquiesced.

"Yep," everyone said.

Quentin's eyes, brilliant with anticipation, watched the magician show his empty pockets to everyone.

Quentin couldn't wait to put the handcuffs on the world's handcuff king.

"There is nothing in the pockets," Alice said, somewhat skeptical.

"I'm ready," Houdini told Quentin. "Handcuff me, and keep the key."

Houdini placed his hands in front of him.

"*Immejtly*," Q answered, happily putting the handcuffs on Houdini's hands crossed in front of him. Quentin turned the key five times, shaking the handcuffs, making sure they were locked.

"That key locked the handcuffs," Q said, proudly clinging to the key. "Now you have to do magic to take the handcuffs off."

"Good job, Quentin," Houdini said. "Do you think I can free myself without the key?"

"Nope," Q answered, sure of himself.

Quentin was in awe of the famous magician.

"They are fastened very securely," Houdini said, wriggling his wrists.

"London, come and check the handcuffs, and make sure Quentin locked them," Houdini told London.

London approached Houdini and double-checked the handcuffs to confirm they were fastened securely.

"All good," London said, winking at Quentin. "Locked without a doubt."

"Here I go," Houdini said.

He raised his hands as high as he could for everyone to see.

He then spread the handcuffs as far apart as he could.

"How am I going to free myself of those?" Houdini said, looking preoccupied, twisting and twisting his wrists.

"You just can't," Q said in awe.

"Q, show everyone the key," Houdini said.

"There is no way you can take those handcuffs off without it," Q said, showing the key to everyone.

Suspense was in the air.

Could he or could he not?

Henry James was delighted. He loved a good magic act.

"We'll see," Houdini said. "Let's try one more time."

And in a few seconds, Houdini wriggling his wrists was out of the handcuffs.

"No!" Q said. "How did you do this?"

"Magic," Houdini answered. "That's the secret I learned from the San Kich Akimoto Troupe."

"What's the secret?" Q asked.

"You need to be a magician to know the secrets of magic," Houdini said, laughing.

"But I'm a magician," Q said, putting the handcuffs on. "David, lock them up."

David picked up the key from Q and locked the handcuffs.

Q followed Houdini's example and wriggled and wriggled his wrists, accidentally moving a clown off the shelf Kipling was admiring.

"David, do you still have the key?" Houdini asked.

"Yes."

Houdini shook the handcuffs.

"Pretty secure."

"I can't release them," Q said, furiously shaking his hands. "I did exactly what you did, and it's not working."

"David, check the handcuffs," Houdini said.

“They are locked.”

Everyone was glued to the scene.

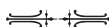
Houdini looked at the group and at Quentin.

“OK. It looks like you need a little magic,” Houdini said, laughing.

Houdini put his hands on Quentin’s wrists, and in a second, he was holding the handcuffs in his hands.

“Wow!” Quentin exclaimed in awe, begging, “Won’t you tell me the secret?”

“Magicians don’t reveal their secrets,” Houdini said, seriously picking up the forgotten clown knocked off the shelf by Quentin.



“Interesting clown,” Houdini said. “Here, Quentin, have a look at it. There could be a president’s signature on it.”

“You think so?”

“Yes.”

Quentin grabbed the toy clown and inspected it. “No. No president’s signature.”

Quentin put the clown back on the shelf.

“Quentin, let’s check out the animals,” David said. “You never know.”

“OK,” Quentin said.

Michelle was already standing by Kipling.

David, Quentin, Ethel, and Archie approached Kipling, who was admiring animal figurines lying among fans and pictures filling a whole wall of shelves.

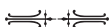
“There is a whole bunch of wooden animal carvings: horses, giraffes, zebras, baboons, elands, camels, bears, and lions.”

"Some of them look like circus animals. Do you think some of these were gifts from the circuses that came to the White House?" Michelle asked.

"That's what I was telling Q," David said.

"Possibly," the president agreed.

"Let's see if any are signed," Q suggested.



"Who is that clown?" Michelle asked, pointing to the picture of a clown with animals on a poster. "Was he famous?"

"Dan Rice was the most famous entertainer in the country for a while. He campaigned for President Taylor, who rode on his circus bandwagon. Some say he was president Lincoln's court jester. He was not only a clown, but he was also a presidential candidate," the president said.

"Jump on the bandwagon," Jack London said, laughing.

"When Dan Rice suggested to Zachary Taylor to ride on his circus bandwagon for his campaign, campaigners started saying 'jump on the bandwagon' to elect Zachary Taylor for president," Houdini said.

"Like Cinderella," Ethel said. "Her wish came through after the carriage took her to Prince Charming."

"Does that mean taking a ride in a circus wagon is magic?" Quentin said.

"It was magic for Zachary Taylor. His wish came through. He became president," Alice said.

"There is a lot to be said for the expression 'jump on the bandwagon,'" Frost said.

"Everybody jumped on the bandwagon for the president's game," the president said, laughing.

"Exactly," Frost said.

"Is that Dan Rice on the poster hanging next to the entrance?" Michelle asked, pointing.

"He dresses like Uncle Sam," David said, going closer to the poster.

"Who is Uncle Sam?" Quentin asked.

"Dan Rice, President Lincoln's court jester," Ethel answered.

"The famous clown presidential candidate," Michelle added.

"Oh yeah," Q said.

"I read that Lincoln saw Dan Rice ride a horse in the circus," Archie said.

"But did Dan Rice visit Andrew Johnson?" Quentin asked.

"He certainly did," the president answered.

"Really!"

Q was now motivated to find out and started turning every animal on the shelf.

"Quentin, there is a poster with Andrew Johnson," David said. "It says Hang On to Your Johnson Reelect President Andrew Johnson 1868."

"Is it signed?" Q asked.

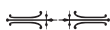
David turned the poster around and said, "Yes."

"Goody, goody."

"There are lots of posters advertising Dan Rice and the circus shows," Michelle said. "Beautiful pictures of circus animals."

"Let me see," Q said.

They all looked through the many colorful circus posters. But they couldn't find any signed by presidents.



"Do you think rhinos were part of the circus seventy years ago?" Michelle asked, looking at the rhino Jack London had given Kipling.

"I think so. The circus was the world's largest menagerie at that time," David replied.

"P. T. Barnum traveled all over the world to find animals for his circus."

"Poor animals," Michelle said. "They worked so hard and then put in cages."

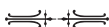
"Maybe the rhino belonged to Andrew Johnson," Quentin said, reaching out to grab the rhino, but Jack London, intrigued, was still examining the rhino.

"It did. This rhino was given to AJ in 1865," London said, looking at the initials on the rhino's back.

"Can I see? Can I see?" Quentin asked with a new light in his eyes.

London gave the rhino to Quentin. "Sure, it's all yours."

Quentin eagerly took the rhino and examined it. "My president. Finally something fun."



"*Mmwonk*," David said, laughing.

"*Mmwonk*," Michelle repeated.

"What are you guys doing?" Quentin asked.

"We are mimicking the rhino," Michelle said.

"That's what a rhino says when happy," David said.

Quentin was quietly observing Michelle and David shaking his head.

"Aren't you happy?" Michelle asked, waiting for Quentin's response. "The rhino is giving you a point."

"Yep!" Quentin answered, looking for something to do.

“Won’t you say *mmwonk*, Quentin?” Michelle asked.

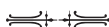
“*Mmwonk*,” Q said, playing along. “What does it say when it’s unhappy?”

“It honks,” David quickly answered.

“Honk, honk, honk,” Quentin said, approaching Ethel.

Ethel, still unhinged about the feather, looked at Q and repeated, “Honk, honk, honk.”

They all burst out laughing; even Kipling was amused by the playful interaction. He nevertheless wanted to finish the story, even though the morale of the story didn’t apply to the group present.



“In my story, the rhino had no manners and to this day still doesn’t,” Kipling said, finishing his story.

Michelle and David looked at each other, smiling. “Another fun story.”

“Sometimes you are a rhino,” Ethel, still piqued, told Q, “because sometimes you have no manners.”

“Ethel, I understand you are upset, but there is no need to say that to your brother,” the president interceded. “Mr. Kipling is telling us the end of the story, and in his story, the rhino was born with a bad temper. Quentin was born a happy little fellow.”

Ethel lowered her eyes, feeling misunderstood. Quentin had, after all, tickled her. She wasn’t in a good mood. It didn’t help to have her big sister be a fierce competitor. Alice always got everything she wanted. But she was never in a bad mood for long.

“Maybe we should put Q in jail,” Archie suggested, laughing.

"Yes, let's," Ethel agreed joyfully.

"The theme of the story is, don't take what doesn't belong to you, or there will be consequences," Michelle said.

"Why don't you want to put me in jail?" Quentin asked. "I haven't taken anything."

"No, you make things happen," Ethel said, almost laughing. "You upset me."

"It's just for fun, Quentee," Archie said.

"You are right, but I don't like it," Quentin said.

Q then looked at the shelf with the many circus figurines.

"How about putting the rhino in jail? It belongs in this circus wagon," Q said, putting the rhino behind the bars of the toy circus wagon. "He did steal from the baker."

"Very true. The rhino did steal from the baker," Archie said.

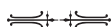
"This circus wagon is beautiful," Michelle said, touching the little wagon.

"It's an old Barnum & Bailey wagon," the president said.

"I have an idea," Archie said. "Come on, guys."

"Archie, there are only a few minutes left to play the game," the president warned. "Don't go too far."

CHAPTER 24



JAIL TIME OR NOT?

They followed Archie leaving the shelf with animals, passing many chests.

“Where are we going?” Ethel asked.

“Wait a minute. You are not putting me in jail, are you?”

Quentin asked.

“Why not?” Archie said jokingly. “Ethel, what do you think?”

“Great idea,” Ethel said, amused.

Quentin said. “Hey, remember Jack. I’m not Jack.”

“Jack?” David asked. “Do you want Jack to go to jail?”

“No. Not our Jack,” Quentin answered, laughing.

“Jack is a toy soldier,” Archie said. “He was a spy and a criminal.”

“I’m not a spy, and I’m not a criminal,” Quentin insisted.

“Well, Quentin, actually, you did commit a big crime,” Edith said, teasing him.

“What?”

"You upset Ethel," Archie replied, laughing.

"All I did is tickle her neck with a feather."

"Come on, Q," Archie said. "It will be fun."

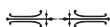
"How about you go to jail for falsely accusing me?" Quentin said.

"Who is in favor of jail time?" Archie asked, looking at David, Michelle, Ethel, and Quentin.

No one replied, which was a good thing because the president was looking at them and wouldn't have approved of the punishment, even though Tad Lincoln's jail was always a good time to be had.

"Oh come on, Q. It will be fun," Archie said.

"Archie, only criminals like spies and killers go to jail," Q said. "Let's find Jack and put him in jail."



"OK, for now, no jail time for Quentin," Archie said, disappointed. "If we don't find Jack, we play a game. Fair?"

"How about you and I play the game now instead of looking for Jack?" Quentin asked.

Archie looked at Ethel. She nodded.

"Playing a game is OK by us," Archie said.

"A trial would have been fun," Ethel said.

"Let's have fun. I'm challenging you to a game of War at Sea," Quentin told Archie.

"And the loser goes to jail?" Archie said.

"Now, you are talking," Q said, happy about this twist. "That's a great idea."

"Can we all play?" David asked.

"No," Quentin said. "Sorry, it's a one-on-one game. Besides, the challenge is between me and Archie."

"Wait a minute," Ethel said. "On second thought, a War at Sea game between the two of you would be fun to watch, but is there time? Father is expected us to finish the president's game."

"I think the president's game is over," Q said.

"You think so," Archie said.

"What makes you think that?" Ethel said.

"I'm done playing," Quentin said. "There is nothing else to find. Didn't you all find everything there is to find on your president?"

"Actually, yes. You are done; so am I," Archie said, concurring with Quentin

"I'm done too, and so is Alice," Ethel said.

"So am I," Michelle said. "By the way, what happened to Alice?"

"I saw her talking with Kermit about the party downstairs," Archie answered.

Michelle looked at David. "How about you, David? Are you done?"

"With a president like Jefferson, I could spend days finding things about him," David said. "But if everyone is done, I'm OK with all I have found."

"We know you are the winner," Quentin said.

"Why doesn't David play the game?" Archie said, and looking at David, added, "You wanted to play the game, didn't you?"

"Yes," David answered.

"But the game is between you and I," Quentin insisted.

"This is not the time to start a new game," Ethel said with authority, regaining her sense of duty.

"You are right, but let's just go check who is in jail right now," Archie suggested.

“OK!” Quentin agreed. “But even if Jack is not there, we agreed to play a game to see if I was going to jail.”

Ethel frowned but didn’t rise any objections.

“Jack, the toy soldier, must be bad,” Michelle asked.

“He was very bad,” Quentin said.

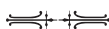
“When given a military job, he would leave his post or fall asleep,” Archie said. “Just like Tad Lincoln’s toy soldier.”

“He was court-martialed and put in jail,” Archie said.

“I didn’t commit such a crime,” Quentin said.

“If Jack is not there, then let’s leave it be,” Ethel said, tired of listening to this back-and-forth clash.

“Agreed,” Archie said. “Quentin, you are off the hook for now.”



“On forward, let’s charge ahead,” Quentin said, repeating his father’s famous words, walking toward a tall wall of boxes.

“I can’t wait to see Tad Lincoln’s jail,” David said.

“What do you think it looks like?” Michelle asked. “Do you think it’s a real jail?”

“Why wouldn’t it look like a jail?” David replied.

“Well, because...I don’t know,” Michelle said, slowly weighing her every word. “I’m trying to imagine how I would build a pretend play jail. David, how would you do one?”

“Hmm, I’m not really interested now in a pretend jail. I’m too old for that,” David said, shrugging his shoulder. “But...but if I was six years old, I’d get a huge cardboard box and cut out a window in the front. Then I would stick

thick lines of paper that would look like pretend bars in the window, and above the window I would write the word *jail*.”

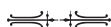
“That’s good. How do you think Tad Lincoln built his?” Michelle asked.

“Not cardboard for sure,” Quentin said with a mischievous smile. “Tad’s jail is one of a kind.”

“Really. How so?” Michelle asked.

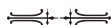
“You’ll see.”

CHAPTER 25



QUARTALOCHEWS

Bitzer was still filming.



On the way to Tad Lincoln's jail, they walked past a door with a sign announcing Tad Lincoln's theater.

"Oh, wait, wait. Look, this sign says Theater! I want to see the theater. Please, can we stop and take a peek?" Michelle asked.

"No time now. How about later, for sure?" Quentin answered, stopping at the wall of boxes.

"OK," Michelle said, disappointed. "I love the theater."

"So do we," Quentin said. "We do plays all the time. It's so much fun."

"I bet," Michelle said with a twinkle in her eyes.

Quentin stood in front of a deluge of colorful playful designed boxes.

"Here we are," Archie said, pointing to a mountain of whimsical boxes.

"Is that the jail?" Michelle asked, surprised.

"Kind of."

"Oh!" Michelle mumbled, thinking, "Is that really it?"

"Yep," Quentin answered, cracking while glancing at Archie, his accomplice.

Archie and Quentin walked confidently to the boxes. Michelle, David, and Edith followed.

"I don't understand," Michelle said. "I only see hundreds and hundreds of playful boxes."

"Me too," David said, confused.

"Where is the jail?" Michelle asked.

"This is the jail," Q said, laughing, pointing at the stacked-up boxes.

Michelle looked at David, quizzically smiling. "One of a kind, I guess."

"That's because it is Quentin's kind of jail," Archie said rascally.

"Isn't it fun?" Q said mischievously, loving the amusing prank, watching Michelle and David's reaction.

"Quentin, what did you do?" Ethel asked, baffled too.

"Why? You don't like it?" Q asked back.

"Where is the entrance?" Edith asked, searching for it.

"This is it," Archie said, seriously having a hard time not laughing.

"I made it special by building a secret entrance...Well...concealing the entrance with the boxes from the Pretty Village game and other games," Quentin answered, loving the zany move.

"Hmm, I have to admit it's pretty ingenious," Ethel said, touching the empty toy boxes. "I was wondering where you kept disappearing every five minutes."

"I was bored," Quentin answered. "This kept me very busy."

"Fun," David and Michelle said at the same time.

"I remember this. So these are the houses surrounding the railroad part of the Pretty Village game?" David asked, pointing at all the boxes bearing the Village Game game's name from the floor to the ceiling.

"They are. All my friends bring their Pretty Village games here," Q answered.

"Why? That's a lot of games. There are hundreds of boxes," Michelle asked, impressed by so many boxes stacked up five feet high.

"Because we are building a country together," Quentin answered.

"You are almost there, but you need a couple more villages," Ethel said facetiously.

"I know," Quentin added.

"What will you call your country?" David asked, curious.

"QuArTaLoChewS," Q said, emphasizing every syllable.

"Quartalochevs sounds so cool," David said.

"Sounds like it will be a fun country," Michelle added.

"Right now we are having fun just building villages," Quentin said.

"What does 'Quartalochevs' mean?"

"Well, why don't you try to guess?" Quentin said. "It's pretty easy."

"Another game?" Michelle asked.

"Why not?"

"I have never heard of that word, so give me a clue to start with," David said. "Michelle, do you know?"

“No clue,” Michelle replied. “How about you Ethel—do you know?”

“No, sorry.”

“Here is a clue,” Q said, observing all three with glee. “My name.”

“You naaame...Your name is not Quartalochews which is not easy to say, by the way,” Ethel said, elongating every syllable, pronouncing the name very slowly.

“You are right,” Q said. “Think hard.”

“Hmm,” David said. “Easy. It starts with your initial. Am I right?”

“You got it,” Q said. “If you can guess the whole thing, I’ll make you part of our country’s name.” Looking at Archie, he added, “Don’t you dare tell.”

“I won’t—that would take the fun out of it.”

“I’ll think about it and get back to you,” David said.

“No problem.”

“In the meantime, this wall, made up of all these different games, is really cool, just like the name of the village,” Michelle said in awe.

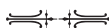
“Can you believe all these games were played by everyone that has ever lived in the White House?” Archie told Michelle and David.

“Except for the village game,” Quentin corrected.

“Wow!” David said. “That’s a lot of game playing.”

“That’s the White House for you,” Archie responded jestingly.

“Really!” Michelle said.



"Yep! There are games of chance, cards games, board games, table games, parlor games, quiz games, track games, and so many more," Archie said all in one breath.

"I don't recognize most of these games," Michelle said, examining the boxes.

"Why don't you pick out a box to take a better look?" Quentin suggested.

"OK. Yankee Pedlar, What Do You Buy?" Michelle said, admiring the box lying on the floor and picking it up. "I love the cover, but I have never heard of that game."

"Michelle, believe me you will love the Yankee Pedlar's card game," Ethel said. "It's all about shopping."

"I love shopping," Michelle said, opening the box with a peddler holding a clock in front of a horse-drawn cart. "How do you play it?"

"There is eleven different vendors and sixty merchandise cards," Edith said. "My favorite vendor is the toy dealer."

"To be a toy dealer would be great fun," Michelle said, looking at all the cards and putting them back. "What else is there?"

"Michelle, look what I found," David said, pointing to the Man in the Moon.

"That looks familiar," Michelle said, laughing, looking at Quentin. "Is that one of your favorite games?"

"I haven't played it yet," Q answered.

"You appeared through a moon just like that," Archie said, looking at both David and Michelle.

Michelle and David laughed. "We certainly did. The Man on the Moon spewed us out."

"You made quite an entrance," Archie said.

"It was magic," Q said.

"The Man on the Moon is popular," David said. "There is a movie, a game, a party. All about the man on the moon!"

"Have you ever seen so many games in one place? It's like a toy store," Michelle said, picking one game after another and reading each title out loud: "Game of Snap, Mother Goose Party, Peter Peter Pumpkin Eater, Baa Baa Black Sheep, Jack and the Giant Killer, Little Goldenlocks and the Three Bears. These games are about nursery rhymes and fairy tales. Do you play those?"

"Sometimes," Q answered.

"How about Fish Pond?" David said, looking inside the box. "That looks like fun."

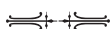
"Yes. You would like the game, David," Q said picking up the fishing pole, trying to get the blue fish.

"Q, we don't have time to play," Ethel reminded Quentin.

"You are right—we have other games to play," Quentin said, putting the fishing pole back in the box.

"Quentin, may I remind you there is only one game that's important right now?" Ethel said, always staying on task. "I'm not even sure why we are here."

Quentin didn't want to listen to her; he was happy showing all the games to his new friends.



"Guess what my favorite games are?" Q asked.

"War games, for sure," David answered.

"Yep!"

"What a surprise!" Michelle said, laughing.

Q went and carefully picked up a few boxes in the middle of the wall, making the hole in the wall bigger.

"We need to open the whole center. Everyone needs to take the boxes from here to here, top to bottom," Q ordered, moving his arms up and down, showing the area that needed to be cleared right in the center of the wall.

"How fun," David said, reaching out for boxes at the top of the wall in the center.

"Michelle, watch out," Archie screamed out as boxes fell down and barely missed her.

Michelle quickly grabbed the fallen boxes, reading, "Don't Give Up the Ship, Uncle Sam at War with Spain, Mimic War, Game of the Little Volunteer, and..."

"Don't give up the ship," Ethel told Q. "You almost did."

"That game is different—it's a board game," Q retorted. "You know that." Looking at Archie, he added, "Archie these are your favorite: Uncle Sam at War with Spain, Mimic War, and Game of Little Volunteers."

"Yep, you forgot Advance and Retreat," Archie said. "You didn't mention it because you always lose at that one."

"Well, OK, you, you always lose at Rough Riders Ten-Pins," Quentin retorted.

"That's because you always make sure to do something to make me miss knocking down the cowboy dude," Archie said.

"Oh! Look, David, there is another game named after President Roosevelt," Michelle said. "Roosevelt at San Juan."

"I see, I see," David said, distracted, looking at Games of Base-Ball lying on top of the Pretty Village games. "Michelle, look at this baseball game made in 1866."

"Wow!" M said. "I didn't know the game of baseball was that old."

"Roosevelt at San Juan is a serious game," Q said. "But it's no fun to play it because the whole family knows everything there is to know about the battle at San Juan. It's a fact game."

“Give me an example,” Michelle said.

“Why?”

“Just curious. I want to see how well I’d do.”

“OK. Archie, read Michelle a question, please,” Q told Archie, busy taking some more boxes down.

“What famous saying of Washington did my father quote a year before the Spanish-American war?”

“Oh, oh! You got me,” Michelle said, scratching her head. “No idea.”

“Washington said, to be prepared for war is the most efficient means to promote peace,” Archie said.

“Forget it. Too many facts. I don’t know enough history,” Michelle said. “Let’s look at the other games.”

“Then you wouldn’t like Young Folks Historical Game,” Q suggested.

“Or Yankee Doodle: A Game of Historical History—it’s all about knowing facts, from the Boston Tea Party to the Chicago Exposition,” Archie added.

“You are right. I’d rather play a game of skill,” Michelle said, looking around.

“Are you good at sports?” Archie asked her.

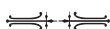
“Yes,” Michelle answered.

“Do you think you would be good enough to be in the Olympics one day?” Q asked.

“Yes, if I tried hard enough,” Michelle answered. “I’d love to go to one.”

“How about going to St. Louis next year?” Archie asked. “St. Louis is hosting the first Olympic games outside of Europe.”

“I’d love to go,” Michelle said. “That would be fun to see the best athletes in the world compete.”



"Michelle, I know a game for you. How about Base-Ball?" he opened the box and took out painted metal game pieces in the form of baseball players.

"Why not?" Michelle answered. "Clever to play baseball on a board with metal players."

"We play this game a lot when the weather is bad," Archie said.

"But do girls play real baseball?" Michelle asked.

"I don't," Ethel interjected.

"If they want to," Archie replied. "Girls we know prefer either the game of Golf or the game of Basket Ball. Don't you?"

"I like any games," Michelle said.

"My father likes the Foot Ball game," Archie said, winking.

"Soldier Ten-Pins is fun too," Q added.

"Is that another name for Rough Riders Ten-Pins?" David asked.

"No, same idea but different game," Archie said.

"How about the game of Napoleon the Little Corporal? Your father must love that game," Michelle said, picking up another box that almost landed on her head. "Your father appointed Napoleon Bonaparte's grandnephew to his cabinet."

"He does, but again, he loves every game," Archie said.

"Because he says games build character," Quentin said.

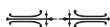
"All I can say is the Pretty Village is a monster game as far as size," D said, pointing to the hundred boxes.

"Why are there so many boxes?" Michelle asked.

"Because each box has only one building, which we need to put together," Quentin answered.

"This is so much fun to do," Archie said. "When it's

snowy outside, we have nothing to do but create villages by assembling buildings.”



“You forgot another great game we like to play when we can’t go outside,” Archie told Quentin.

“I know what you are going to say,” Quentin said. “And I love that game. I wish we could play it now.”

“Which game?” Ethel asked.

“Pillow-Dex.”

“Oh yeah.” Ethel said. “It is so much fun. The whole family plays.”

“What’s that game about?” David asked.

“You play with a balloon, either standing up or sitting down at a table, hitting it with a racket. There are two teams of players facing each other, tapping the balloon trying to land it on the opposite side for a point.”

“How fun!” Michelle said.

“My kind of game,” David said.

“I bet the balloons pop easily, so the game can’t last long,” Michelle said.

“It lasts long enough,” Q said.

“But the Pretty Village is fun too,” Edith said, “and not as wild. I have built two buildings.”

“How big is the village?” Michelle asked.

“Huge,” Q answered. “We have hundreds of buildings with roads, trees, lakes.”

“Sounds very nice. Are some of these boxes still full?”

“Most are empty. Some are full because we haven’t had time to play. When the weather is nice, we go outside to

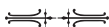
play," Q answered. "And we have also been too busy doing other things."

"Can I see it?" Michelle asked.

"Sure," Q said. "When we go back to the main part of the attic, it's after the theater. We also built a railroad that goes around the villages."

"That's great," Michelle said.

"The trains are very old and interesting. I loved them," David said. "The president even rode in a similar train."



Ethel was busy picking up game pieces that had fallen out of a box.

"Oh! Look, the Sociable Telephone," Michelle said, picking up two wooden blocks that had fallen. "Is that a fun game?"

"Yes," Ethel said. "It's all about proper behavior and how you interact in various situations."

"And players play connected by a telephone," Michelle said, the wooden blocks to her ear.

"But Mixed Pickles is more fun," Ethel said, pointing at a box with a picture of kids laughing and a dog pulling a tablecloth off a table.

"How do you play it?"

"It's a fun word game in which players create silly sentences from phrases on cards," Archie said.

"Yes, it is lots of fun," Edith said.

"Maybe we should play What's His Name," Quentin said.

"Why?" Michelle asked.

"It's a game about famous people but mostly presidents."

“Very apropos game to play today,” David said, laughing.

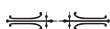
“I bet you are good at that game,” Michelle told Q.

“I am,” Archie answered instead.

“How about Komical Konversation Kards? Conversation cards? Are they fun?” Michelle asked.

“In our family, conversation games are always lively,” Edith said.

“I can imagine,” Michelle said.



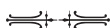
“Guess which president got the Mansion of Happiness?” Archie asked.

“President Jackson,” Ethel replied.

“No, President Fillmore in 1850,” Archie answered.

“Great and great info,” Michelle answered. “Could I get a point even though it is not a document?”

“Why not?” Q said. “Alice is getting points for a woman’s shoes.”



“The game of Don’ts looks interesting,” Michelle said, laughing. “Quentin, don’t you play that game all the time?”

“I do,” Quentin replied, laughing.

“Michelle, why don’t we stay here a month and play all these games?” David asked, laughing but not meaning it, looking at the Wall Street game.

Michelle didn’t reply. She was intrigued by every game she touched.

“Wall Street is a great game,” David said. “My father plays Wall Street all the time.”

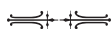
“You know your father plays the real game,” Michelle said, teasing.

“He certainly does,” David answered.

“My brothers like it too,” Q said. “When I am older, I’ll play it.”

Without realizing it, they had taken down every single box making up the center of the fake wall, creating a huge empty gap.

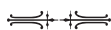
CHAPTER 26



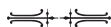
TAD LINCOLN'S JAIL

“There it is.” Q said, taking a bow in front of black curtains. “Let me present Tad Lincoln’s Jail.”

Eyes wide open, not knowing what to expect, they stood there looking at the sign above the curtains, wondering what Tad Lincoln’s jail was like inside.



Bitzer is filming.



Quentin pushed open the curtains.

With great expectation, they walked into the room.

“That’s it! But it’s an old red popcorn wagon without wheels,” Michelle said in awe.

“It’s not old at all,” Q said.

"It's not!" Michelle said surprised.

"No."

"Clever," David said, liking the idea of a popcorn wagon for a jail.

"Fancy for a jail. It says 'the Cretors' on the door. Was that really Tad Lincoln's jail?" Michelle asked.

"Well...kind of—it's our version," Q said proudly.

"It's the Roosevelt version," Archie said hesitantly. "The Cretors made the wagon and gave it to us for Ethel's birthday party three years ago."

"Cool," David said.

"The wagon is to keep spies in until their trial,"

"Why don't you call it the Roosevelts' jail then?" Michelle asked.

"Tad Lincoln inspired us," Archie said.

"He was our age and played lots of war games with spies and enemies just like us," Q said. "He put his spies and enemies in jail."

"When President Cleveland became president, he gave a lot of stuff away," Archie said.

"He did not get rid of everything," Q said. "We found a sign that said Tad Lincoln's Jail."

"We decided to have a jail like he did and named it Tad Lincoln's jail," Archie said.

"I like it. This is a cool jail," Michelle said. "The popcorn, roasted peanuts, and chestnuts pictures on the wagon does throw a curve to the meaning of jail. It makes it look like fun."

"Yea, we are still kids," Q said.

"Charles Cretors made the first popcorn machine and used to sell popcorn from a wagon like this," Archie said.

"Popcorn, anyone?" David said, peeking in the window.

"Sorry, the popcorn machine doesn't work," Q said sadly.

"When it does, we bribe the spies with popcorn and roasted peanuts to get their secrets," Archie said.

"What's this other wagon with the bars?" David said, pointing to an old wooden wagon.

"It's a spare jail," Archie answered. "We sometimes get very busy."

"We need to keep the spies and the captured enemies separated," Q said. "Popcorn for the spies and the cage for the criminals and bad soldiers."

"This one looks like a real jail," Michelle said.

"That's where we keep the really bad one," Q said.

"No doubt—you need a jail with bars for them," Michelle said amused.

"The wagon used to move the animals from one place to the other," Q explained.

"It is a circus wagon," David remarked.

"Yep, it is an old circus cage wagon for animals," Archie said.

"A jail for animals!" Michelle said. "How sad!"

"This one says 'Joshuah Purdy Brown, 1830,'" David said, looking at the red wagon's sign. "Lincoln was president in 1865. This could be the authentic Tad Lincoln's jail—is it?"

"I think so," Quentin answered.

"Quentee?" Ethel said. "Tell the truth."

"Well, Ethel, it could be. We don't know how long this wagon has been here," Q said. "This is a very old wagon used to move circus animals from town to town."

"I know Archie said that already," Ethel said.

"It's got fancy wheels," David said, pointing at the gray and yellow spikes.

“Do you know sometimes elephants pulled those wagons through towns?” Quentin asked.

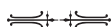
“I would have liked to see that,” David said, examining the old wagon.

“Do you think the elephants were mistreated?” Michelle asked, always concerned about the well-being of animals.

“I was wondering about that,” Archie said.

Michelle and David were in awe. The White House was full of treasures and fun stuff in the most surprising places.

CHAPTER 27



BONES AND THE SECRET ROOMS

“You want to see something really fun?” Quentin asked walking into the popcorn wagon.

“Jack?” Michelle answered.

“No, I just checked; Jack is in the cage,” Archie said, standing by the door. “Quentin is off the hook.”

“Great,” Michelle answered.

“Come inside,” Quentin said, calling them in.

They walked into the wagon and sat on the bench.

“Ready? Look,” Quentin said, pointing at a large political cartoon on the floor.

“King Andrew the First,” Michelle said, reading aloud.

“Born to command,” David said.

“Hey, that’s me,” Ethel said, lifting the poster of Andrew Jackson dressed as king.

“Aren’t you happy we stopped by?” Quentin asked her.

"Yes, as long as we make it quick," Ethel answered.

"One more point," Michelle told Ethel. "Too bad we didn't find any Andrew Jackson king's clothes!"

Ethel picked up the poster and examined it smiling.

"A door?" David asked.

"Yes," Quentin said. "A secret door."

"A trapdoor?" Ethel said rolling the poster looking at the door.

"Yep, an escape hatch," Quentin answered.

"An escape hatch?" Michelle said. "Why would you have an escape hatch in a jail?"

"Smart spies," Q said, laughing.

"It's a make-believe jail," Archie said. "We have fun playing scheming spies that get away."

"Let's all pretend we are all spies trying to escape jail," Quentin said.

"I am game," David said.

"Ready! You want to see where we, spies, escape?" Q said, grabbing the little handle on the door and raising it.

"Yes," answered both David and Michelle, watching Quentin lift the trap door.

Ethel was quietly studying the situation.

"David, is that where you came when you left the elevator?" Michelle asked him, looking at the pitch-black area.

"I'm not sure. This space under the trapdoor looks familiar, but who knows?" David said, stretching his neck, trying to see. "I can't tell—all I see is a dark hole."

"Let's go down and look for some mastodons' bones," Q said, teasing.

"Where does that go?" Michelle asked.

"Let's find out," Q said, walking down the staircase.

"What about the president's game?" Michelle asked, following Q.

"We won't be there long," Q answered. "Just long enough to see a few secret passages while looking for bones."

"I hope so," Edith said, hesitating to go down. "You know Father is expecting us to play the game in the attic not here."

"I know," Q said.

They all followed Quentin, walking carefully down the few steps down.

"It's very dark down there," Ethel said. "Quentin, do you have a flashlight?"

"No, we don't need one. It will only take a minute to get down. I can make light," Q said.

"So now you are a magician," Ethel mumbled.

"Ethel, haven't you been here?" Michelle asked.

"No," Edith answered. "I rarely come to the attic, so I have never seen this trapdoor."

"Really!" Michelle said, surprised Ethel had not been to the attic. "If I had been you, the attic would have been my first place to explore."

"How far does this passageway go?" David asked.

"Not that far," Archie answered.

"Is this a secret passageway?" Michelle asked.

"One of many," Q answered, grinning.

"Quee, where are we going?" Ethel asked.

"You will see," Q said.

"Quee, tell me what's down there?"

"Don't you like surprises?" Q asked her.

"It depends," Ethel said, stopping at the landing. "So tell me what's down there."

“Oh OK. More stairs. Lots of rooms,” Q answered. “And a dumbwaiter.”

“Places to hide treasures, then,” Michelle said.

“Bones?” David asked.

“Oh yes, lots,” Q answered, smiling.

Archie, chuckling, elbowed Quentin.

Quentin smiled.

“You two seem to be up to something,” Ethel said, hesitantly following.

“Exploring is always a fun adventure,” Archie said.

In the semidarkness, they all ran down three steps, stumbling into a wall that suddenly opened into a landing. Just as Michelle and David, excited at this adventure, were beginning to wonder where this would lead them, they came to a hallway with no apparent door. Everyone stopped. There was nowhere to go.

“Now what, Quentee?” Ethel asked, seeing no way out.

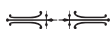
“Have faith,” Archie said.

“Yeah, Ethel, have faith,” Quentin repeated.

Everyone waited in silence.

Without paying attention to a Danger sign posted on the wall, Q and Archie leaned on it. The wall suddenly pivoted.

“Come on in,” Q ordered.



“Q, where are you taking us?” E asked again, hesitating to enter. “The sign says Danger Don’t Come In.”

“Don’t be a scaredy-cat,” Q said, opening the door and entering a room.

“I’m not scared, just prudent,” Ethel answered, stamping her feet.

Michelle threw an inquisitive and unsure look at David.

"This is amazing. Let's check this out," David said, unafraid. "Nothing to fear. Remember, we are in the White House."

"I can't believe this is happening," Michelle said, suddenly overjoyed. "There are secret places in the White House, and we are exploring them."

Everyone stumbled into the dark room managing, not to trip on one another.

"Where in the world are we?" Ethel asked.

"I'm not sure," Q answered. "So, watch for your step."

"Oh no!" Ethel said. "Why?"

"There could be a hole in the floor," Quentin said, laughing.

"I knew it, Q," Ethel said. "I'm not going any further."

"Oh! Come on, Ethel, I was joking," Q said, walking to a hatch door.

"That's not funny," Ethel said, exasperated, shaking her head, rolling her eyes.

"Let me show you," Quentin said, bending down and lifting the hatch. "It's OK. See? The hole is covered up with a door."

"Another trapdoor?" Michelle asked.

"Yep," Q answered.

"It looks like there is a slide under the door—isn't that a slide?" Michelle asked, uncertain.

"It is," Q said. "Spy need to get away quickly. You want to slide down?"

"Where does that go?" David asked.

"Not far," Q said. "Come, let's all slide down."

"You go first," David told Quentin.

"OK, but only if Ethel comes too," Q said. "How about it, Ethel?"

Ethel looked at Michelle and David's exciting look, saying, "Do you really want to do this?"

"Why not?" David answered.

"Because we really need to be in the attic finishing the president's game, and also, I'm not sure what Q is up to," Ethel said, uncomfortable. "But let me take a look," she added, not wanting to disappoint David and Michelle.

She approached the opening, knelt down, and peeked in. "Hard to see."

"If we drop a coin, we might be able to tell how far this goes," David suggested.

"Great idea," Q said, throwing a coin down the slide.

Clink, plink, clink.

"That is it," Michelle said. "It's a very short slide."

Michelle sat down at the opening and pushed herself down. "Here I go."

Everyone stunned at Michelle's sudden move approached the opening on the floor.

"It was fun, but too short of a slide. What are you waiting for?" Michelle yelled from a couple of feet down.

"Michelle, why didn't you wait for me?" David asked, sliding.

"Ethel, please come," Michelle yelled, standing on top of another trapdoor and opening it. "There is another room with a staircase."

"Come on, Ethel, we all have to go join David and Michelle," Q begged.

Ethel thought for a minute.

"Promise me you won't do anything mischievous."

"I promise," Q said.

"OK," Ethel said. And there she went, followed by Quentin and Archie.

"Wasn't that fun?" Michelle asked Ethel.

"Yes," Ethel said, examining the tiny room with a high ceiling.

"Quentin, is that another trapdoor?" David asked, pointing at the spot where Q was now standing.

"It is," Quentin said, moving away from the marked opening.

"Is there another slide under the door?" Michelle asked.

"Yes," Quentin said, opening the trapdoor where a slide was visible.

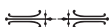
"Goody, goody," Michelle said. "Let's slide all the way down."

"Phew! Not me," Ethel said, pinching her nose. "What's that musty smell?"

"*Yuck!* That is nasty," Michelle said, suddenly smelling the nasty odor.

"Forget it—no way am I going down that stinky slide. As a matter of fact, I'm ready to go back up," Ethel said, walking toward the stairs.

"Ethel, let's all go back in a minute," Archie told her.



"By the way, be careful where you walk. I have seen bones around," Q said.

"You did," David said, his eyes wide open, excited.

"And you know what? I'm pretty sure there are old mastodons' bones," Q said.

"You don't want to crush them," Archie, grinning, added.

"Mastodon bones, we have got to see them," David said.

"And...and...there could be stuff belonging to your president, Andrew Jackson," Q told Ethel, wanting to keep her there a little longer.

"Even if there was, we can't see anything," Ethel retorted.

“Oh OK, wait there,” Q said, walking straight, tripping on a box.

“What made that noise?” Ethel asked.

“Just coins,” Archie said. “Q tripped on a box of coins.”

“I forgot they were there,” Q answered.

“I heard crunching,” Ethel said.

“You heard right,” Q said.

“Bones?” David asked.

“Yes,” Q answered.

“What’s happening?” Michelle asked.

“I don’t know,” David answered.

Noise was heard. Movement was made.

“All good. Here, give me your hand, Ethel,” Q said, instead handing her a short, cold object.

“What’s that?” Ethel asked, picking the smooth object. “I can’t tell what it is.” “Can’t you tell? It’s a mastodon bone,” Q answered.

“Let me see,” David said, excited.

“Quee, are you telling the truth?” Ethel asked.

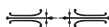
“Why wouldn’t I be?” Q said.

“I don’t believe you,” Ethel said. “Father hasn’t said anything about mastodon bones being here.”

“That’s because we haven’t told him yet,” Archie said.

“OK, that’s enough. It’s time to go back,” Ethel said. “Bones in a secret passage under the attic floor is creepy.”

“Can’t you just wait a minute?” Q said, opening a small dormer that immediately lit the room.



“Finally some light,” Ethel said, looking at the piles of bones in front of her. “Hmm. Bones. More bones. I don’t like this at all. Let’s go back immediately.”

"Please, Ethel, give me a few more minutes," Q begged her.

"Why?" Ethel asked, looking at the bones. She was not impressed with the exploring so far.

"It will be fun. Just a few more things I want to show David and Michelle."

"For Michelle and David, five minutes more that's all," Ethel said, looking at Michelle and David, who were enjoying the outing.

Ethel stepped back to the back of the little room. Michelle and David walked to the pile of bones.

"Are these really mastodon bones?" Michelle asked, unbelieving, bending down to have a closer look.

"Yes," Q said, smirking.

"I expected huge bones. These are so small," Michelle said naively.

"They shrunk over time," Q answered, chuckling.

"Must have been shrinking for millions of years," David said, chortling.

David bent down and picked up an animal skeleton.

"It looks like a miniature dinosaur," Michelle said.

"Quentin," David said, laughing. "Interesting take on the mastodon, but it's..."

Ethel approached David, wanting to hear what he had to say.

"The gang has been collected dozens of animals' skeletons, and we are going to identify them as soon as we find a *Megalonyx*," Q said, proud of using the new word.

"Hmm," David replied.

"So, David, is it a mastodon?" Ethel asked, looking at the skeleton David was holding.

"I'm afraid Quentin has mislabeled this skeleton," David said.

“Oh, Quentin, I wanted to believe you, but it’s so hard,” Ethel said. “What is it?”

“It’s a lizard,” Archie answered.

Michelle and David burst out laughing.

David gave the little skeleton back to Quentin.

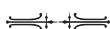
“A lizard...And you were part of this whole scheme, Archie,” Ethel told Archie solemnly.

“What scheme?” Archie said, walking to a door behind them. “Just like Father, we are serious collectors.”

Q pushed the skeletons and bones close to the wall.

“Quentin, what are you doing?” Ethel asked.

“Preserving our important collection by making sure we don’t walk on them.”



“Quentin, what’s that thing?” David asked, pointing at a big square wooden box jutting out of the floor.

“Is that a secret box?” Michelle asked.

Q looked at Michelle for a minute, and before he could answer, Archie said. “That thing is a dumbwaiter.”

“Jefferson’s?” David asked.

“I don’t know,” Archie answered.

“Where does it go?” Michelle asked.

“It goes from the basement to here?” Archie answered.

“I bet it is also a secret way to the basement,” David said.

“It is,” Q answered. “Few people know about this one.”

“It brings stuff up or down,” Archie said.

“People?” David asked.

“Yes,” Q quickly answered, laughing.

"Let's not waste a minute. Let's check it out," David said.

David, curious, rushed to the dumbwaiter and opened the door to the box.

"Wow! That's big—bigger than I thought. I can fit in there," David said, entering the dumbwaiter. "Michelle, there is enough space for you. Why don't you come in?"

"I'm good," Michelle said, peeking in. "That's big, but aren't you coming right out?"

"Yes, in a minute," David said. "I want to see what this is about."

"Come out. I'll show you how it works," Quentin said.

"Oh no!" Michelle said.

"Don't worry, Michelle. This isn't going anywhere," Archie said. "Someone strong needs to pull the ropes."

"Oh yeah," Quentin said, running to the unseen cables hidden by a wall on the other side of the box.

"Quentin, don't you dare," Archie screamed, rushing to where Quentin was.

Quentin didn't listen.

"Why not?" Quentin said. "I'm a small boy. I'm not strong enough to move the cables."

"David, please come out," Michelle said, worried. "I think Quentin is plotting something."

At that moment, the dumbwaiter rattled—*click, clack, clank*—and started inching down.

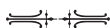
"What's happening?" David asked, trying to keep his balance. "The dumbwaiter is shaking."

Archie walked to Quentin and pulled him away from the cables.

"What were you going to do?" Archie asked Quentin.

"Nothing."

"I don't believe you."



In silence, they walked back to the dumbwaiter's door to check on David.

"Ouch!" David said, touching his head while sprinting out.

"What happened?" Michelle asked.

"Something fell on my head," David answered, touching his head again.

Quentin, now all concerned, rushed to take a look.

"Look!" Michelle said, pointing at an object lying outside the dumbwaiter.

"What's that on the floor?" Quentin asked, picking up an object attached to a chain.

"Oh! That must be the thing that fell on my head," David said.

"It's a pocket watch," Ethel answered. "Let me take a look at it."

Quentin handed it to Ethel.

"Look, there is an engraving on it," Quentin said. "What does it say?"

"Andrew Johnson, president of the United States, 1865."

"It's beautiful," Michelle exclaimed.

"And it's my president," Quentin exclaimed.

"It is," Ethel said. "The watch says it's time to go back, but I'm holding on to the watch. I'll give you the pocket watch when we get back up to Tad's Jail."

"Come on, Ethel," pleaded Quentin.

"No, I'm keeping it for safekeeping," Ethel said. "Let's go back now."

“OK,” Q said. “But, Ethel, think, there might be more objects in the dumbwaiter.”

“Q is right,” Archie said. “There might be more. Let’s check it out, Ethel. Then we will go back. It won’t take long.”

“OK, Archie,” Ethel said, stopping him from entering the dumbwaiter.

“I’ll go in to check it out,” Ethel said, determined not to have anything stop their going back.

Surprised, Quentin and Archie watched Ethel go inside the dumbwaiter. She looked around for a minute and yelled, “No more stuff. Let’s go.”

They all walked around the dumbwaiter to a strange-looking wall divided in sections.

“What do you think is behind this wall?” David asked the Roosevelt’s brothers.

“Jonathan,” Michelle said, laughing.

“Jonathan went on his own a long time ago,” Archie said.

“What else could there be? Let’s find out,” Q answered.

“Quentin!” Ethel said.

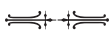
“It’s on the way. It will be fun,” Quentin replied.

They walked along a new passageway.

“We didn’t come this way. Quentin, take us back the way we came,” she said, waving the pocket watch in front of his eyes.

“It’s a shortcut,” Quentin said, pushing one of the wall sections.

“Wow! David, did you see that? The wall is a secret door,” Michelle said in awe.



They followed Quentin into a small room filled with old boxes.

“Is this another secret room?” Michelle asked.

“Kind of,” Q answered. “This was a perfect place to hide secret documents. Tad and Willie Lincoln loved to play here.”

“Wow, Tad Lincoln was here too,” Michelle said.

She then whispered to David, “I never know if Q is telling the truth.”

“Tad and his brother played all over the White House,” Quentin said.

“This is so cool,” David said, playing along.

“Quentin, really! How do you know that? Tell the truth,” Ethel said.

“Because we are like them, and we play all over the White House,” Quentin said.

“It doesn’t mean they played here,” Ethel insisted.

Quentin shrugged his shoulders, “Why wouldn’t they play here?”

“Quentin, I’m sure they played here too,” David whispered to Quentin.

“Are there lots of secret places around this room?” Michelle asked Q.

“Hundreds,” Quentin answered.

“Quentin!!!!” Ethel said.

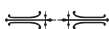
“It’s true,” Quentin said. “How would you know! You have been to the attic only three times.”

Ethel stuck out her tongue, shrugged back, and turned away to look around.

“Archie, why don’t you make a plan of Tad’s jail and its secret rooms? Wouldn’t that be a point for you?” David asked.

“Because it wouldn’t be authentic; it would be my plans,” Archie answered.

“Try anyway,” Quentin suggested.



“Quentin, can we see more secret rooms?” Michelle asked, going toward a door.

Quentin looked at Ethel for approbation.

“Quentin, let me remind you, I hold your pocket watch. We should go back the same way we came,” Ethel said. “Please lead the way.”

“I’m going the right way. I know the White House like the palm of my hands. We have to go through this door,” Quentin said, pointing to where Michelle was standing.

“Let me open the door,” Michelle said.

Michelle opened the door to another room.

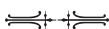
“This room is filled with books,” Michelle exclaimed.

“Is this the way?” Ethel asked Archie.

“Yes,” Archie said, picking up a book and then opening another door that gave into a hallway. “This goes to the stairs to Tad Lincoln’s jail.”

“Are we done exploring?” Michelle said sadly.

“Yes, but we will come back if you and David want to,” Quentin said persuasively.



“Quentin, where are you?” a booming voice was heard asking.

“Oh, oh! Father is calling you,” Ethel said.

“It’s OK—he knows we are having fun,” Quentin said.

“Answer him,” Ethel said.

Quentin, Archie, and Ethel ran to the stairs.

“Hey, wait for us,” David cried out, dragging Michelle along.

“Yes, Father,” Quentin answered, calmly approaching the trapdoor.

“That was a quick way, Quentin,” Ethel said.

“What are you doing down there?” the president called out, peeking his head through the trapdoor.

“We were exploring secret rooms,” Quentin answered, coming to the trapdoor. “And there so many more we haven’t seen.”

“Quentee, you know there are no secret rooms in the White House,” the president told him.

“I knew it. I knew it,” Ethel said.

“But, Father, all these stairs behind those secret panels leading to different places,” Q said, looking at the group. “The servants say those are secret rooms.”

“Ha ha ha,” the president laughed. “The stairs lead to the servants’ quarters and storage rooms used to store away belongings of the White House occupants. Some of the rooms have big laundry chutes going all the way to the basement.”

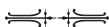
“David, do you think the laundry chutes were the slides we saw under the trapdoors?”

“Most likely,” David answered as they rejoined the Roosevelt kids.

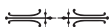
“There goes the idea of secret rooms,” Michelle said, very softly disappointed.

“Come on, Michelle. The president is not going to admit there are secret rooms in the White House,” David whispered, not wanting the president to hear that.

"I guess you are right," Michelle told him.



Bitzer is filming.



"Onward, forward," the president said.

Leaving the dark area and Tad's jail, Quentin couldn't keep his eyes off his dad. He had forgotten all about Andrew Johnson's pocket watch.

"Father, why is your nose red and blue and your throat yellow? What happened to you?" Quentin asked, scrutinizing his father.

"Oh, just a little game?" the president, winking, said.

"Did Houdini throw a spell on you?"

"No," the president said, laughing. "Kipling did."

Michelle looked at David, smiling.

"I know why," she told him. "Do you know why?"

"I think I have a clue," he answered grinning.

"Baviiian."

"Yep."

"Where are we going?" Ethel asked, staring at her father.

"Let's stop at the theater for a minute," the president answered.

"Great! I have been wanting to see Tad Lincoln's theater," Michelle said, exuberant.

"Mr. President, it was lots of fun playing spies that escaped in those secret rooms," Michelle added.

"For us, those rooms were secret rooms," David said.
"Thanks, Quentin."

“Is Quentin in trouble?” Michelle asked the president.

“Did you have fun?” the president asked everyone present.

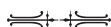
“We certainly did,” Michelle and David answered.

“That’s important. We have just finished the president’s game, unfortunately without you. And we, the adults, took over and decided to start an activity. I’d like all of you to be there.”

“What do you mean, Father?” Quentin said. “I thought the winner was to decide the next game.

“The game was forfeited. So the adults decided the next activity.”

CHAPTER 28



THE BIG SURPRISE

“We have a surprise for you,” the president said.

“For me?” Q replied, looking up at his dad.

“Yes, for you and everybody else,” the president replied.

“What’s the surprise?” Q asked.

“We are here. Let’s go in the theater and find out,” the president said mysteriously.

“Why? What’s in the theater?” Q asked.

“You will see,” the president answered.

The children rushed to the theater, and there they saw Loretta in the tree squawking, “It’s about time. It’s about time.”

“Time for what, I wonder.” Q asked, scratching his head.

“The surprise,” Archie answered.

“Loretta, you look so pretty sitting on that branch,” Michelle said.

“Oh! Look at Mr. Caruso,” Q said, pointing at the tall brown form in front of them.

“Ha ha ha, he looks like a tree,” David said, laughing.

“He does,” Q said.

“Mr. Caruso, you look like a beautiful tree,” Michelle said, looking at the striped trunk costume and his head covered with a headdress of branches.

The children obediently followed the president to the yellow stage.

Michelle and David, being the slowest, were examining Tad Lincoln’s theater.

“So this is Tad Lincoln’s theater,” Michelle said, looking around. “Nice.”

“Yes,” Q replied, overhearing. “Don’t you like it?”

“It’s amazing.”

The president stopped at the stage.

“Father, where is the surprise?” Q asked, seeing nothing out of the ordinary in the little theater they used almost daily.

“It’s coming,” the president said. “Keep your eyes and ears open.”

“They are.” Q said, walking around the room, ready to leave. “There is nothing.”

Then a beautiful voice was heard.

Quentin stopped and looked at the famous writer.

“It’s Kipling,” Michelle said happily.

“That must be the surprise,” David told her.

“I knew it.”

“Boys and girls, leave your play behind. Come and sit by me. Leave all behind. Come closer. I’ll tell you a story. I’ll tell you a story of how the leopard got its spots. And now starts my story.”

Michelle glanced at David and smiled, saying, “Can you believe it? Kipling is going to tell us a story.”

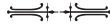
"Your wish."

"Father, I get it," Quentin said, looking at his father.

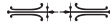
The president smiled.

"This is the surprise," Quentin said.

"Keep your eyes open," the president said. "Take a seat and stay in it until I tell you it's time to move."



Bitzer was filming.



All the children took their places in front of the yellow stage decorated with big yellow rocks and trees.

Michelle's eyes were fixed on the stage.

She looked at David and smiled.

"Hmmm. OK, but, Father, you make it sound so mysterious," Q said, unable to sit still.

"I'll be right back," the president said, walking on the stage and passing by Caruso, who was standing very straight, humming.

"A singing tree, no less," Michelle said, laughing.

As soon as the president disappeared, Caruso stopped humming.

Silence was supreme. Loretta didn't utter another word.

"O my most Beloved..."

All of a sudden, from behind a tree, London was heard saying, interrupting Kipling, "Wait, wait, my tail fell off. Where is it?"

"You never had one," the tree said.

"Of course I did."

There was lots of unseen hullabaloo behind the tree.

“What’s happening over there?” Quentin asked, getting up.

“Quentee, please sit down. Father said to stay in our seats,” Ethel said.

“OK,” Quentin said, sitting back down reluctantly. “But something is going on back there. Don’t you want to know?”

“Yes, but I want to be surprised.”

Then a burst of laughter was heard.

“There is the tail,” Houdini said.

“Hey, that’s my tail,” Henry James said.

“No, it is mine,” Edith Wharton said.

“For heaven’s sake, all the tails look the same—just pick one,” Frost was heard saying.

“What’s going on there?” Quentin asked, wriggling in his seat.

Everyone hushed.

There was complete silence.

“Please, please, come out,” Quentin begged. “or I’m coming back there to have a look.”

Not another sound was heard.

Quietness.

Silence.

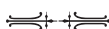
Then.

“Who is behind? What are they doing? What’s taking so long?” Quentin asked.

“Quentin, please be quiet,” Ethel begged gently.

“I’m sorry,” Quentin said. “Why can’t I go and find out?”

“Please, Mr. Kipling, continue,” Ethel said curious.



Kipling smiled. “Let’s enter the magic kingdom.”

All were entranced impatient to hear the story.

"O My Best Beloved, here is a story of the High and Far-Off Times where a leopard lived in the high veldt."

"High and far-Off times?" Quentin asked, opening his mouth once again.

"Once upon a time," David replied.

"High veldt?" Quentin asked again.

"It's flat land covered with grass in South Africa," David answered.

Kipling smiled and continued.

"Once there lived in the high veldt where there was sand, sand-colored rocks, and sand-colored grass..." Kipling said.

"Was everything yellow? Animals and people too?" Quentin asked, interrupting the narrator.

"Yes," Kipling answered.

"How can you tell one animal from the other then?"

"Quentin, you are right. That's a huge problem for the animals in the high veldt for everything to all be yellow, isn't it?"

Everyone watched as each animal came out. The all-yellow leopard was first. Holding its head high, proud, and powerful, it went to hide behind a yellow rock.

"Leopard, you are all yellow," Quentin said.

The leopard roared softly.

"Houdini, is that you?" Quentin asked the leopard.

The yellow hunter with a bow and arrows, following the leopard to the rock, looked at Quentin and said, "Shush!"

But Quentin couldn't keep quiet.

"He is all yellow too," Quentin whispered to David. "Who is the yellow man?" he added.

"I know," David whispered back. "Think hard."

"It's the hunter," Ethel said. "Can't you see he is carrying a bow and arrows?"

"Yes, I wasn't paying attention," Q said.

"It will be fun trying to figure out who is who."

"So tell me, who is the leopard?" Quentin asked.

"Sh," Ethel said. "It doesn't matter, does it?"

"It's important to me. David and I are playing a game," Quentin murmured.

"Look at the yellow horse," Quentin told David.

"It's a zebra without stripes," David answered.

"You could have fooled me," Quentin said.

The proud zebra flanked the graceful yellow giraffe, the stocky yellow eland, and the show-off beautiful yellow koodoo walked stealthily on the sand-colored ground, sniffing the air for danger and searching for food.

The eland bumped on the giraffe's behind.

"Hey, watch out!" the giraffe screamed gently. "I can't see that well. My neck is too high, and my legs are too long."

"Who is the giraffe?" Quentin asked.

"Sorry, Edith," the eland said. "You stopped to look at the tree, and I was right behind you."

"Ha ha ha, it's Mrs. Wharton," Quentin said, laughing.

"No damage done, Edith," the zebra said, reassuring her.

"The zebra spoke," Quentin said. "It's, it's..."

"Henry James, her close friend," David said.

"Oh yeah, it is," Quentin said.

Kipling, sitting down on the stage, enjoyed the interaction between the children while surveying the scene silently.

"And the yellow man is Churchill," Quentin added.

"I'm the Hunter," Churchill said, correcting Q.

"The Ethiopian," Kipling said, clarifying.

"Who is the Ethiopian hunting? The leopard?" Quentin asked.

"No," said the leopard sitting on a yellow rock. "I hunt with the hunter."

"I know! I know who the leopard is," Quentin said, all excited.

"It's Jack London," Michelle said.

"I knew that. If the hunter uses bows and arrows, Leopard, what do you hunt with?" Q asked.

"All I need are my teeth and claws," answered the leopard, showing his teeth and paws.

"So who are you hunting in this quiet place?" Q asked.

The leopard pounced on the ground and walked toward the zebra and the giraffe and the eland and the koodoo.

"Me," said the scared zebra, trying to get away from the leopard.

"Me," said the nervous giraffe, not knowing where to go.

"Me too," said the frazzled eland, zigzagging.

"Me," said the koodoo, staying quietly in place, hoping to be invisible to the leopard.

"Why can't you just all hide behind the trees?" Q asked.

The animals went to Caruso, the tree. For once, Caruso remained quiet.

The leopard and the hunter followed.

"Everywhere we go, the leopard and the hunter find us," said the zebra.

"They are blending with the sand," the eland said.

"We just can't hide from them," the koodoo said.

"What are we going to do?" the giraffe asked.

"Why don't you move away from this sandy meadow? Go in the forest," Q suggested.

"Great idea," the zebra said, unaware of the leopard approaching him.

The leopard jumped a few feet from the zebra and scared him.

"I am tired of this," the zebra said, running away.

"Where are you going?" the eland asked.

“I remember a forest full of trees, bushes, and striped, speckled, patchy shadows,” the Zebra said.

“Where is it?” the Koodoo asked.

“I don’t remember,” the Zebra said. “That’s the problem.”

“Giraffe, you have long legs and a long neck. Why don’t you peek over the trees?” the Eland suggested.

“Great idea,” said the Giraffe.

‘And the Giraffe looked and looked over the trees.’

“I know where we should go,” said the Giraffe, who could see far away. “I see a great forest full of trees where the leopard and the hunter won’t find us. Follow me.”

“Let’s follow Giraffe,” the Zebra said. “It sees where to go.”

‘And away they went looking for a great forest. After a while, they learn to avoid anything that looked like the leopard and the hunter.’

“Hey, where did they go?” Quentin asked.

A moment of silence ensued.

“I see it. I see the great forest full of trees, and stripy, speckly, patchy-blatchy shadows,” Giraffe said, galloping toward the forest ahead.

‘For a long time, they scuttled, walking in the shade, walking in the sun.’

“And they hid,” Quentin said, unable to contain his excitement. “But will the leopard find them?”

“Quentin, stop interrupting. Are you telling the story, or is Mr. Kipling telling the story?” Ethel said, reprimanding Quentin.

“I’m sorry I can’t help it,” Q answered, feeling bad.

“Sorry, Mr. Kipling, please tell us what happened,” Ethel said.

"They hid," Kipling continued. "And after a long time, they ventured out slowly a little at a time, keeping an eye out for the leopard and the Ethiopian, standing half in the shade and half out of it..."

The giraffe came out, passing Caruso the tree.

"What happened to Giraffe?" Quentin asked, looking at the giraffe coming out, appearing from behind the trees. "She's yellow with spots, and look at the zebra; he has stripes...Now he really looks like a zebra..."

"Shh," Ethel told Q in a low voice.

'And what with the slippery-slidy shadows of the trees falling on them, the Giraffe got blotchy, and the Zebra got stripy, and the Eland and the Koodoo grew darker with little wavy gray lines on their backs like bark on the trees.'

"Oh wow! That's how they got their stripes and spots," Q said, all excited.

"The eland and the koodoo have stripes, too, but they are hard to see—they look like tree trunks," Q said as the animals were walking happily in between the trees with not a care in the world.

"So, though you could hear them..."

"Pee-yew! What smells?" Quentin said, interrupting Kipling.

At that moment, Jack looked up at Quentin with a guilty look.

"Jaaack, did you eat something you weren't supposed to!" Q said, continuing to pinch his nose at the deadly smell of the dog's fart.

"And smell them..."

"Jack, you had to have a say in this story," Q said, laughing.

"Just like you," Alice said, laughing.

"You could seldom see them..."

"I see them," Q said.

"Barely," Archie said.

"Then only when you knew precisely where to look. They had a beautiful time in the 'sclusively speckly-spicky shadows of the forest."

"'Sclusively speckly-spicky shadows," Q, loving the sound, repeated.

Kipling paused for a moment, seeing Jonathan escape Quentin's pocket.

"Is that it? Is that the end of the story? What happened to the leopard?" Q asked, looking around.

"Here we are," the leopard and the Ethiopian said in unison.

"I haven't had any breakfast nor dinner in forever. I am so hungry I could devour a giraffe, a zebra, an eland, and a koodoo all in one bite," the leopard said, looking around grumpily. "Where they did go?"

"I don't know. Let's continue looking for them."

"I'm so weak—I need food to go on," the leopard said, forlorn. "Where have they disappeared to?"

"I don't know. Here, have some rats," the Ethiopian said, giving him some rats.

"Better than nothing," the Leopard said, scarfing the rats.

"Oh no!" Q said, searching his pocket. "Jonathan, where are you?" Then, looking at the leopard and the hunter, he asked, "You are not going to eat him, are you?"

"No," the Leopard said, holding his tummy.

"Quentin, do you think they would eat Peter?" Ethel whispered to him.

"Of course not—our rabbit is too fast and quick," Q said, watching the leopard and the hunter holding their stomachs.

"Have pity on me—I'm starving," the leopard said. "All the animals have disappeared."

"At last, they were so hungry, they did eat rats and beetles and rock rabbits..."

"Yucky," Ethel said.

"And then they had the Big Big tummy ache, both together..."

"Of course they have. Who wouldn't after eating rats!" Ethel said, watching the leopard and the Ethiopian holding their tummies in pain.

"Sh," Q told Ethel.

Then appeared in all his glory the president, barking, who walked to the leopard and the Ethiopian.

"That's Father," Quentin screamed, surprised.

The children laughed with delight.

"Father, you look funny. Who are you supposed to be with that pink nose and long tail?" Q asked, laughing, looking at the strange creature.

The president winked.

"Then they met Baviaan, the dog-headed Baboon, who is quite the Wisest Animal in all of South Africa..."

"Father, you are the wisest of the veldt and the wisest person in the whole USA."

"Where has all the game gone?" the leopard asked Baviaan.

"And Baviaan winked. He knew but wouldn't tell."

"Can you tell me the present habitat of the aboriginal fauna?" the Ethiopian asked Baviaan.

“That meant where did the animals go. The Ethiopian always used the same words. He was a grown-up using grown-up words,” Kipling said.

“And Baviaan winked,” Q said, amused, looking at his father.

“He knew,” David and Michelle said in unison.

“Then said Baviaan, ‘The game has gone in other spots. My advice is for both of you to go into other spots as soon as you can.’”

“Why?” said the Ethiopian.

“Because it is time for a change, and my advice to you is to change as soon as possible.”

“OK,” the hunter said.

“The Ethiopian and the leopard walked and walked until they came to a forest.”

“A forest full of tree trunks all ’sclusively speckled and sprottled and spottled, dotted and splashed and slashed and hatched and cross-hatched with shadows.”

“Speckled, sprottled, spotted...” Q repeated, loving the sounds.

“Now say that quickly, and you will see how shadowy the forest was,” Kipling said.

“OK,” Quentin said. “Speckled and sprottled and spottled and...oops! What’s the rest?”

“Speckled and sprottled and spotted, dotted, and splashed...I can’t remember what comes next,” Ethel said, laughing.

“Let me try,” David said.

“Let’s do it together. It will be fun,” Michelle said.

“One, two, three, go,” Quentin said.

“Speckled and sprottled and spotted, dotted, and splashed and slashed and hatched and cross-hatched with shadows,”

Michelle and David, looking at each other laughing, said all the words as quickly as possible and faster than anyone else.

"My, my, it is a very shadowy forest," the president said, laughing.

The Ethiopian and the leopard were looking at the forest with its spotted shadows.

"What is this place?" asked the leopard.

"I don't know," said the Ethiopian, smelling. "But guess what? I smell Giraffe, and...I can hear Giraffe, but I can't see Giraffe. Strange!"

"That's bizarre," said the Leopard, smelling. "I can smell Zebra..."

"And I can hear Zebra, but I can't see Zebra," interrupted Quentin, amused.

"I know why we can't see them. It's very simple: we forgot what they look like," the Ethiopian said, straining his eyes to see better.

"Oh, come, come!" the leopard said. "How can you forget a golden seventeen-foot-tall Giraffe and a fawn-colored four-foot-high Zebra!"

"I think Leopard is right," Q said. "How can you forget how a seventeen-foot-tall animal looks like?"

"But we did," the leopard said.

"Look again in the speckled, spotted forest," Q added.

"Hmm, let me take a second look," the Ethiopian said, looking in the speckly-spickly shadows of the forest. "They ought to show up in this dark place like ripe bananas in a smokehouse."

"Like bananas in a smokehouse," Q repeated, laughing.

"But they were nowhere to be seen. The leopard and the Ethiopian hunted all day, and though they could smell them and hear them..."

“They couldn’t see them,” the children, laughing, said in unison.

“No use. We are wasting our time hunting during the day,” the leopard said.

“So they waited till dark...”

The whole attic became dark. No one could see anything, but then a huge noise was heard.

“And the Leopard heard something; he jumped at the noise.”

“I can’t see the leopard,” Q said.

“I can’t see anything,” Ethel said.

“This smells like Zebra, and it feels like Zebra...” the leopard said. “Hmm. What are you?”

“Are you sure you are not smelling Jack?” Quentin asked.

“Ha ha.” Michelle and David laughed.

“Please, Q, shush,” Ethel said, loving the play.

More noise was heard.

“Did you hear that?” Q asked.

“And when he knocked it down, it kicked like Zebra but..”

“He couldn’t see it,” the children said at the same time, watching the black shadows of the leopard fight with the zebra.

“Got you, whatever you are,” the Leopard said. “I’m going to hold you captive till morning because there is something about you I don’t understand.”

There was a big noise. All the children, so engrossed in the story, jumped at this unexpected turn of events.

“Presently he heard a grunt and a crash and a scramble,” Kipling said.

More crashing and scrambling noise was heard.

"What's happening?" Q asked. "We still can't see anything. It's too dark."

"Sh," Alice said softly. "It's still night."

"I've caught a thing that I can't see. It smells like Giraffe, and it..." the Ethiopian said.

"It kicks like Giraffe," the children, interrupting said in harmony.

"But it hasn't any form," the Ethiopian said.

"How can he not know it's Giraffe," Q said. "It's so tall."

"Don't you trust it," said the Leopard. "Hold it tight till the morning, like I am."

"So they sat down on them hard till bright morning time and then..."

The light came back on in the attic.

"I see, I see," Q said all excited.

"What have you got at your end of the table, Brother?" the Leopard asked the Hunter.

"The Ethiopian, scratching his head, said..."

"I'm not sure. It ought to be Giraffe, but it looks different. It is covered with chestnut blotches. What have you got?"

"And the Leopard, scratching his head, said..."

"It ought to be Zebra, but it is covered all over with black and purple stripes. What have you been doing to yourself, Zebra? Don't you know if you were in the High Veldt I could easily see you?"

"Yes," said the Zebra, "but this isn't the High Veldt. Can't you see?"

"I can now," the Leopard answered. "How is it done?"

"Let us up," said the Zebra, "and we will show you."

"I wouldn't do that," Q said.

"Sh," Alice said.

"I think Zebra has something up his sleeve," Q said.

"They let the Zebra and the Giraffe get up..."

"Oh, oh," Quentin said.

"Zebra moved away to some little thornbushes, where the sunshine fell all stripy, and Giraffe moved off to some tallish trees, where the shadows fell all blotchy..."

"Now watch," said the Zebra and the Giraffe. "This is the way it is done. One, two, three! And where is your breakfast?"

"Bravo," Q said, clapping.

"Leopard stared. Ethiopian stared, but all they could see were stripy shadows and blotchy shadows, but no sign of Zebra and Giraffe. They had just walked off and hidden themselves in the shadowy forest..."

"Smart trick," Q said, elated. "It saved them."

"Hi! Hi!" said the Ethiopian. "That trick is worth learning. Take a lesson by it, Leopard. You show up in this dark place like a bar of soap in a coal scuttle."

"Bar of soap on a sack of coals." Q laughed heartily.

"Ho! Ho!" said the Leopard. "Would it surprise you that you show up in this dark place like a mustard plaster on a sack of coals?"

"Who is going to win this fight?" Q asked, curious.

"The Zebra and the Giraffe," David and Michelle answered, knowing the story well.

"I knew that," Q said.

"Well, calling names won't catch dinner," Ethiopian said.

"I know what they can do," Q said, jumping up and down.

"Oh! I'm sure you know, but can't you be quiet and listen?" Ethel said, annoyed.

"They have to do what the wisest animal of the veldt told them," Q whispered.

The president smiled.

"We don't match the backgrounds. I'm going to take Baviaan's advice. He told me I ought to change," Hunter said.

"But you have nothing to change into," the Leopard said, puzzled.

"You are wrong. I can do something with my skin. That's all I have," Ethiopian said.

"What?" the Leopard said, excited.

"I am going to change to a nice blackish-brownish color with a little purple in it and touches of slaty blue. It will be perfect to hide in the forest," Hunter said.

"So he changed his skin right then and there, and the Leopard was more excited than ever; he had never seen a man change his skin before..."

"Wow!" Q said, watching the transformation. "How about that! Mr. Churchill, you are all black now."

"But what about me?" the Leopard said, when the Ethiopian had worked his last finger into his fine new black skin.

"He..." Q started to say but was stopped short by Ethel, who elbowed him and gave him a warning look.

"You take Baviaan's advice too."

"...to go into spots," Q said, looking sternly at Ethel.

Ethel, frustrated, shook her head.

"But I did," the Leopard said. I went into a lot of spots. I went into this spot with you, and a lot of good it has done me."

"Oh! Leopard, Leopard," Q, shaking his head, said under his breath. "You didn't understand Baviaan."

“Oh!” said the Ethiopian, “Baviaan didn’t mean spots like in places in South Africa.”

“No, he didn’t,” Q said.

“He meant spots on your skin.”

“Yep,” Q said.

“Well! What’s the use of that?” said the Leopard.

“Think of Giraffe,” said the Ethiopian. “Or if you prefer, stripes think of Zebra.”

“Um,” said the Leopard. “I wouldn’t look like Zebra—not for ever so.”

“Well, make up your mind,” said the Ethiopian, “because I’d hate to go hunting without you, but I must if you insist on looking like a sunflower.”

“A sunflower,” laughed Q.

“I’ll take spots, then,” said Leopard.

“You have no choice,” Q said. “That’s part of the story.”

“But don’t make them too vulgar—big. I wouldn’t look like Giraffe...”

“...not for ever so,” the children said.

“I’ll make them with the tips of my fingers,” the Ethiopian said. “There’s plenty of black left on my skin still. Stand over.”

“Then the Ethiopian put his five fingers together—there was plenty of black left on his new skin still—and pressed them all over the Leopard, and wherever the five fingers touched, they left five little black marks, all close together. You can see them on any leopard’s skin you like, Best Beloved. Sometimes the fingers slipped, and the marks got a little blurred; but if you look closely at any leopard now, you will see there are always five spots—off five fat black fingertips...”

“Now you are a beauty!” said the Ethiopian. “You can lie on the ground and look like a heap of pebbles. You can

lie out on the naked rocks and look like a piece of pudding stone. You can lie on a leafy branch and look like sunshine sifting through the leaves; and you can lie right across the center of a path and look nothing in particular. Think of that and purr!"

"But if I'm all this, when didn't you go spotty too!" Leopard said.

"Oh! Plain black is best for me," said the Ethiopian. "Now come along, and we'll see if we can get even with Mr. One-Two-Three-Where's-Your-Breakfast!"

"So they went and lived happily ever after, Best Beloved. That is all."

"Bravo," Q said, clapping with everyone else. Then he ran to the Ethiopian and touched his skin and then his and exclaimed, "Nothing happened. Why can't I change my skin?"

"This only happens in stories," Kipling said, laughing. The curtains closed.

Everyone applauded loudly.

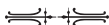
"That was the best play we have seen," David said.

"And the story was told by Kipling himself," Michelle said, exuberant. "Can you imagine the president was an actor in the play?"

"Q, who do you think played the zebra?" David asked, turning around.

Q had disappeared.

"Where did Quentin go?"



At that moment, bells went off for a quick second.

"Is everything OK?" Edith Wharton reappeared without a costume followed by the rest of the cast.

Within a few seconds, guards appeared in the attic, followed by the First Lady.

“What happened? Is there a problem?” the First Lady asked, nervously looking around.

“No problem at all,” the president answered. “We have had a great time playing the president’s game, and we just finished a play. Fun for all was had.”

“I was on my way up to tell you the French ambassador is asking for you when I heard the alarm bell ring briefly.”

“It must have been an accident,” the president said, with blue paint still on his nose. “Thank you, Edith. Let’s go see Ambassador Jusserand, my good friend.”

Then, looking at the children, he added, “Anybody for a hike this afternoon?”

“Yes, yes, yes,” the children replied.

“What’s on your nose?” the First Lady asked.

“It’s all about Baviaan,” the president laughed.

“Baviaan?” the First Lady asked.

“Kipling’s character Baviaan, in the ‘How the Leopard Got Its Spots’ story, the wisest animal in South Africa.”

“I see,” the First Lady said, wiping the president’s nose. “Everyone in the East Room is having a pleasant time listening to music. Scott Joplin is playing. Don’t you think it is now time to rejoin your guests?”

“Yes,” the president said. “You know, the children needed me for a little bit.”

“Ha ha ha,” the First Lady replied. “Are you sure it wasn’t you that needed a little fun time with them?”

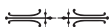
“Ha ha,” the president responded, and looking at the children and the adults, he asked, “Aren’t we all ready for music?”

"We are," Alice says. "I can't wait to hear Scott Joplin. He is so fun."

"People in New York did appreciate your Fourth of July speech—maybe you can repeat it here," the First Lady said.

"Good idea, Edith," the president told her. "Now let's go see what my hiking buddy Jusserand wants. Hopefully a hike. He is the only one able to keep up with me."

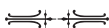
Then the president became serious. The games were over.



Who had won?

The president never pronounced a winner, and because everyone had learned something, it was a win for everyone. They had gone through secret passages, heard Kipling tell a story, and seen a play. All those activities they would have picked as their winning prizes anyway. Only Quentin didn't get his wish of playing baseball on the South Lawn.

"Thank you, everyone, for some fun time in the attic. I'm proud of everyone giving all they had. Everyone wins." He winked and smiled, adding, "Now, let's continue our fun time in the East Room, where great music is being played. Alice, I hear Joplin will play your favorite music."



Turning to the other children, he said, "OK, children, don't you want to go on a hike? Let's go find out when it will be."

"Father, let's go hiking now," Q said.

"Father, should we change?" Alice asked.

“You don’t need to,” the president said. “You represent our presidential history, after all.”

Everyone very cheerfully followed the president out of the attic.

On their way down, the president turned to Quentin and asked, “Quentee, did you ring the bells that sounded the alarm?”

“No, it wasn’t me—really,” Q answered.

“A ghost, then?” Ethel said.

“Oh! Come, Q...What do you mean it wasn’t *really* you?” Alice asked, going down the stairs carefully with the dress that was a bit too long and dragging on the stairs.

Q pulled his vest tight, hiding something.

“I saw something move on the old Lincoln bell system,” Q said. “I went to investigate, that’s all.”

“Sure, you did,” Alice said.

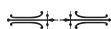
“I saw what happened,” the president whispered in Q’s ear, winking.

Q smiled back, touching his shirt pocket.

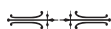
“But make sure you hold it tight,” the president murmured, softly winking.

“Yes, Father,” Q answered, smiling.

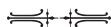
CHAPTER 29



A BAT IN THE EAST ROOM



Bitzer was filming.



As they approached the East Room, there were people everywhere walking from the Cross Hall to the East Room.

“Let’s hurry up to the East Room. Joplin is going to play his new piece called ‘The Strenuous Life,’” a guest was heard saying.

“I hear he plays fabulous,” said a beautiful woman all dressed in white.

At the entrance of the East Room, Alice saw four men looking at her. She blushed and suddenly felt uncomfortable wearing Dolley Madison’s dress.

To these men interested in Alice, she looked gorgeous no matter what she wore. But Alice, loving all the attention, wanted to look her best at all times. And right now, she was feeling awkward.

She looked at all four of them, talking, who couldn't keep their eyes off her.

"Alice, you looked absolutely sensational," Arthur Isselin, one of the young man, said with adoring eyes.

Alice was flattered as she smiled, walking to the four men who were trying to capture her heart: Edward Carpenter, her teenage crush; the dashing Frenchman Charles de Chambrun; lovesick J. Van Ness Phillips, who wanted to marry her; and the big love of her life, Arthur Isselin.

"Are we ready for some ragtime dancing?" Alice asked seductively.

"Of course, and I want the first dance," Phillips said playfully.

"We can all dance together," Alice said, laughing, flirting with all four.

Edward Carpenter looked at Quentin and said, "Quentin, I love the top hat. You look like Abraham Lincoln."

"Young Abe Lincoln," Isselin said, looking at Quentin.

Quentin, who was looking at them, tripped on Princess Alice's dress.

David quickly grabbed Quentin's arm, stopping the fall.

Alice kept her cool demeanor, looked at Quentin reproachfully, but refrained from saying anything.

The handsome four men approached Alice and offered to escort her into the East Room.

"Thank you, David," Alice said with the most flamboyant smile, shaking the dress and seeing it was fine; she continued her walk with her four beaux.

Thanks to David's quick reaction, Quentin remained standing up.

Helas, as he was trying to keep his balance, his vest opened, and a flying squirrel escaped from his pocket. It opened its wing and quickly climbed up a potted plant, gliding above the piano to a chandelier, causing a bit of a temporary pandemonium in the East Room to Quentin's delight.

"A bat!" Edith Wharton was heard screaming. "I thought there were no bats in the White House."

"Not a bat, but a flying squirrel," Quentin said innocently, watching the squirrel rest high on the chandelier.

"Hmm, a 'flying' squirrel," Kipling said, deep in thought.

"I must hurry and find my music. I'm next to play," Paderewski said, all fired up, ignoring the hoopla."

"Every house is a madhouse at some point," Edith Wharton said lightly, watching the flying squirrel, bedazzled by the crystals of the chandelier.

"What a sight!" Henry James said candidly.

"A dream," Frost said.

"I am not a squirrel expert, but this one loves excitement," London said.

"What can I do here to help?" Houdini said.

"Tweet, tweet, tweet," Caruso said, mimicking the flying squirrel.

"Love the flying squirrel. I should glide through the air just like one," Houdini said.

"Novel—the imagination displayed is as it were a flying squirrel's flight from a treetop downward," Frost said.

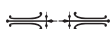
Bitzer was shooting all the action on his beautiful camera.

Joplin, undeterred, continued playing his "Strenuous Life" piece.

Then the squirrel took off again.

“Look at the squirrel go. It’s so weird looking. It has a feathered tail,” Michelle said.

“Absolutely stunning,” Henry James said.



The surprised guests watched the flying squirrel continue its graceful flight around the room.

“A most distinguished guest has decided to entertain us,” the president said, laughing to the applauding crowd; even Edith Wharton was now entranced at the sight.

“Here you are,” Quentin said, pointing to the flying squirrel that had come to rest on a magnificent world globe. He rushed to the globe to save the moment.

“Quentin, look where your friend landed,” the elegant man said with a French accent, pointing to a spot on the globe.

“Where?” Q asked.

“Quartalocheus,” David said, laughing.

“Quartalocheus, never heard of the place,” the ambassador said. “Sounds like an interesting place.”

“By the way, I know what ‘Quartalocheus’ mean,” Michelle said, proud of herself. “I beat you to it, David.”

“Michelle, tell me,” Quentin said.

Quentin, Michelle, and David got to the globe and looked at the spot Jusserand was pointing at.

“It’s the first...” Michelle started to tell Quentin what ‘Quartalocheus’ meant but was interrupted when David blurted out, “France.”

Quentin looked at Michelle, knew what she was going to say and smiled.

Michelle couldn’t finish her sentence because the ambassador was talking. It would have been impolite.

"How about you? Do you know what 'Quartalocheaws' stands for?" Quentin asked David.

"No. But please tell me," David whispered softly.

"It's the first..." Quentin said, not able to continue as the president was now talking.

"Ambassador Jusserand, our squirrel has chosen to land in beautiful Paris," the president said, laughing.

"Besides having refined taste, he is giving you a hint..." the ambassador said, laughing. "So you see, he is ahead of me in bringing you an invitation to visit our beautiful country, France."

"It would be an honor to visit your great country," the president answered. "When I was young, we traveled through Europe, starting in Paris, going to Egypt, up the Nile, through the Holy Land—saw Palestine and part of Syria—visited Greece and Constantinople too."

"Wow!" Davis said. "I'd love to see all those places."

"Me too," Michelle echoed.

"Shall we?" David whispered to Michelle.

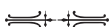
Michelle smiling nodded.

"What a trip! I'd love to revisit the Paris of my youth. I remember the Jardins du Luxembourg, where we raced sailboats. Paris, what memory!"

Just then the flying squirrel flew on Michelle's shoulder.

Quentin quickly grabbed the flying squirrel. Taking a bow to the dazzled crowd, Quentin, smiling, rushed out of the East Room without telling David what 'Quartalocheaws' meant.

David looked at Michelle, holding his coin winked, and said, "Onward to...?"

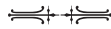


Did Bitzer catch David and Michelle on camera?

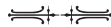
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I'd like to thank the wonderful Rancho Santa Fe Library staff for their incredible help in locating the hundreds of books I requested, especially Jan Stephens who so patiently spent countless hours searching all the California libraries.

I hope you enjoyed the second part of Teddy Roosevelt's July 4th of July Party at the White house, and the fifth book in the America Series.



Send me a little note at Paulinedesaintjustgross@gmail.com



If you have any questions about specific historical material, please email me at Paulinedesaintjustgross@gmail.com

QuArTaLoChewS stands for the first two letters of the main White House Gang members; Quentin, Archie, Taft, Looker, Chew, Stead.

See you in France.



Author and educator Pauline de Saint-Just Gross has written nine books. Her passion for history and historical fiction was sparked by a college history professor who encouraged her to tap into her expertise and creativity.

De Saint-Just Gross, who has earned her master's degree in French Literature, became an educator herself and went on to inspire others as a high school teacher.

De Saint-Just Gross enjoys traveling, swimming, spending time outdoors, playing Words with Friends, appreciating Burgundy wines, good art and music. She loves fairy tales, and always invests her own writing with some of that magic. She invites you to follow her on Twitter @ 2hirondelle.

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